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CHRISTMAS FEAST

A SHORT STORY BY KATHLEE

DEC. 31, 1938

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carefree heart!"

... Anonymous



New bottle and label adopted Sept. 6, 1938

Golden Wedding *the whiskey you feel good about!*

Want to feel good about the Christmas whiskey you give your friends? Give **GOLDEN WEDDING**—the luxury brand of the grand old house of Finch! How could you **HELP** feeling good about it—Every drop is **ALL** whiskey—straight whiskey—and utterly delectable, as you who have tried it know well. Yes, **KNOW WELL** . . . it's the **PERFECT** "Noel" whiskey to give, to receive, and to serve. Even the youngest whiskey in the peerless blend of straight whiskies is 4 years old. Trust Golden Wedding—"the whiskey you feel good about"—to help you make **MERRY** Christmas!



GET IT IN THIS GAY GIFT PACKAGE

—and remember Golden Wedding is Finch's very finest. 90 proof. The straight whiskies in this product are 4 years or more old!

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Even the youngest whiskey in it is 4 years old

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Collier's

December 31, 1938

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Next Week

YE COLLEGE BEAUTY SHOPPE was a good spot in which to watch what went on at the Briarheath College for Women, and Miss Shirdella Flanagan missed no tricks. But even she was surprised the day the college hired a new bus driver. The poor creatures from the college kept talking about him in a simply man-crazy way and making a fuss that would turn almost any fellow's head. Miss Flanagan maintained her poise. "Bus drivers is a dime a dozen," she said.

Later on she had to change that. Mr. Kreeble showed her what a help a real he-man could be when it came to dealing with snakes-in-the-grass and such. "Big Boy" is by Frederick Hazlitt Brennan.

THE Republican party in Kansas has brought forth a farm program. "An American Price for the American Market on the Homestead of the Free" is the way they put it. As far as the farmer is concerned, this means the advantage of the present program (money) minus its disagreeable features (doing something for it). Economically, there may be a few wrinkles still to be ironed out, but politically the scheme is dynamite. John T. Flynn takes you to the scene of action.

IT WAS a simple scheme, the way Jim Reed's mechanic told it. Ken Nelson and this girl, Joel Grey, worked together. Joel was the "Decoy." She saw to it that the rival pilots fell in love with her, then Nelson killed them. It didn't seem possible, but Jim had seen three good flyers sent crashing at the turns. And Jim, too, was in love with Joel. Hurd Barrett tells the breath-taking story.

IT'S our duty to warn you not to overlook the log-birling contest at Escanaba. In case it isn't convenient for you to be there, the next best thing is to read "Cats on the Logs," by Stewart H. Holbrook. If you are going to be there, it's absolutely essential for you to read it.

WE'VE known households—and so probably have you—that were bossed by the cook or the children or the dog or the cat. Lots of people are under the thumb of their pets. To find a car running a household, breaking it up and putting it together again, is a new one. "Eddie Buys a Car," by Budd Wilson Schulberg, gives the facts.

OTHER contributions come from Kyle Crichton, Aimee Larkin, Maurice Barrangan, Octavus Roy Cohen, Agatha Christie, Freling Foster and others.

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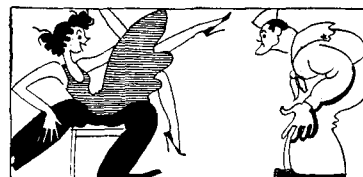
The American Way. Page 50

COVER

ARTHUR CROUCH

Any Week

MR. GEORGE A. DRYDEN of Balboa, Canal Zone, overheard us saying that a lady in Yonkers, New York, had come out without reservation for the largest navy in the world because, said she, "that means more sailors and sailors are about the only fun I get out of life." And that for some reason reminded Mr. Dryden that one of the Canal Zone's night-club entertainers plopped herself down into the lap of "an American minister." Taken to task for unnecessary roughness and told that it wasn't diplomatic or something to sit on the knees of United States ministers, she said: "Well, how was I to know the American government had a church here in Panama?"



AND Mr. F. H. Johannsen of Des Moines, Iowa, thinks we should "spend a little of our sympathy on the eighty or ninety Republicans who are about to take up their duties in Congress." All they have to do, says Mr. Johannsen, is "undo all that Mr. Roosevelt has done, revive rugged individualism, restore prosperity, balance the budget, stop spending, reorganize WPA downward, repeal the Wagner Labor Act and thus clear the way to an overwhelming Republican victory in 1940. There is a chance—a mere chance—that they won't succeed. But it's going to be fun watching them."

IF IT weren't that we have an unconquerable zest for what we call our patriotic obligations we might ignore what Mr. Terence Lough of Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, said. But we feel obliged to tell you. Besides, Mr. Lough said it was no secret. "Canada," said he, "will never become a part of the United States, no matter what happens to Great Britain. There is a well-founded rumor that the States want to take Canada in exchange for England's war debt. Canada will not permit this. Her love for the mother country is too great. What would become of England if it were not for Canada? No, sir, we're sticking to England and if she doesn't like it she knows what she can do."

BUT our sympathy goes out to a gentleman in Two Harbors, Minnesota. One of his neighbors—a real pal—was almost in tears as he told us the story. No one could have

been more surprised than this neighbor-pal when early one morning he beheld his motorcar neatly decorated with everything a well-dressed Minnesotan should wear except underwear and socks. Carefully arranged on the hood and fenders of his car, standing at the curb where he had left it the night before, were somebody's overcoat, coat, trousers, shoes, shirt, everything in short but underwear, socks and the owner. Our friend identified the owner by searching the abandoned garments and slowly but firmly, as a strong man would, walked two blocks to notify the owner's wife and exhort her to be heroic and have faith. Tactfully he asked her first where her husband was. Her husband was in bed, said she—and time he was getting up. And her husband was in bed. Our friend, his pal, found him there—asleep in his underwear and socks. It is about the deepest mystery Minnesota has had in years.

NEVERTHELESS, we had to keep moving, hoping for the best. And at Minot, North Dakota, a somewhat weary-looking gentleman boarded the train, taking the seat in front of us. After settling himself he got out a largish sign which he carefully hung on his coat. "Listen," it read, "I think Hitler is crazy, Washington's full of Reds, business is going to pick up in the spring, we ought to get out of the Philippines and I don't believe in the third term. Wake me up at Spokane."



WE KNOW of no one who has given more thought to WPA and the relief situation in general than Mr. George G. Qualling of Great Falls, Montana. Mr. Qualling is a railroad detective whose duty it is to see that no one rides free—in freight trains particularly. "In six months," laments Mr. Qualling, "I haven't caught a bum. Know why? Bums ain't traveling. Know why? They don't have to. A bum would be an awful sucker to travel these days when the government's begging them to stay put and eat hearty. A couple more months and the government's going to have another bum on its hands. Know who? Me. You can't expect the railroad to keep me in idleness. That's the government's job."

GET going, bums.

W. D.

AT THE FIRST SYMPTOM OF SORE THROAT LISTERINE - QUICK!



**Dangerous bacteria reduced 96.7%
on the average even 15 minutes
after gargling!**

7 Years of Research Reveals that users of Listerine Antiseptic had fewer and milder colds. Millions choose it over Harsh Internal Remedies

Millions now treat colds as acute local infections which many authorities claim them to be. They treat them with Listerine Antiseptic which, in tests, has shown a reduction of dangerous mouth bacteria for a period of several hours.

This method, as clinical evidence shows you, is amazingly effective in preventing colds—and in checking them, once they have started. Already it supplants harsh internal remedies that may weaken the system, upset the stomach.

Tests made during 7 years of research showed that those who gargled Listerine Antiseptic twice daily had fewer colds, milder colds, and colds of shorter duration than non-users. This is a matter of record.



No other method and no other remedy that we know of can show clinical results as

clear-cut as those achieved by Listerine Antiseptic.

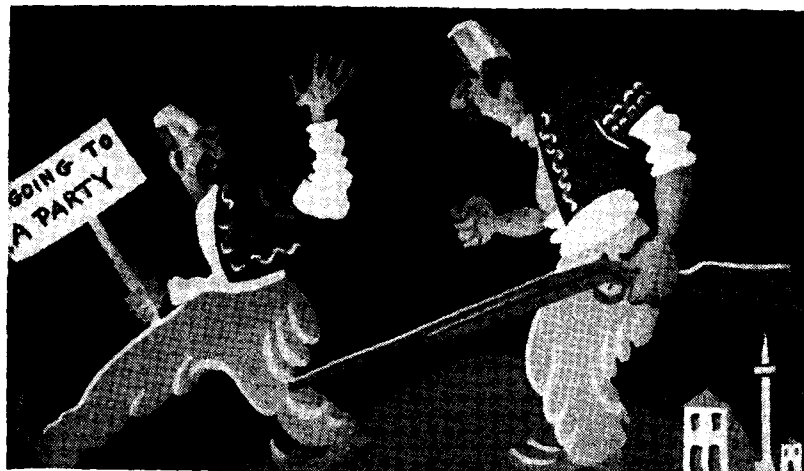
The secret of this success, we believe, must be that Listerine Antiseptic kills millions of mouth-bred "secondary invaders" which complicate a cold. Listerine Antiseptic acts quickly, and without injury to the very delicate membrane. Even one hour after the Listerine Antiseptic gargle, tests showed germs reduced nearly 80% on the average.

Do not think for a moment that Listerine Antiseptic will always prevent or check a cold or sore throat. It will not. We do say, however, that the best clinical evidence indicates that if you gargle with Listerine Antiseptic, your chances of avoiding serious colds are excellent.

LAMBERT PHARMACAL CO., St. Louis, Mo.

LISTERINE
ANTISEPTIC
FOR COLDS

Listen for the Train Whistle! GRAND CENTRAL STATION
Columbia Network . . . Every Friday Evening
See your newspaper for time



KEEP UP WITH THE WORLD

By Freling Foster

The Law of Lek is a strange code that governs the blood feuds of the mountaineers of Albania. Respecting it, one never shoots his enemy when the man has arranged for a period of truce so he can go to town, hold a party or gather his harvest. These feuds, therefore, may be "turned on or off" at will so they will not interfere with one's business or pleasure.

Clameur de Haro, the old Norman custom of "crying for justice," still survives on the Channel Islands. It is used to resist encroachment on property. At the disputed spot, on his knees and before two witnesses, the aggrieved person cries: "Haro! Haro! Haro!" adding a plea to his prince for aid and a denunciation of the aggressor.—By John Hart, New York City.

The most extensive man hunt in history was for the three De Autremont brothers who held up a mail train in Oregon on October 11, 1923. Not only were circulars in a hundred languages sent throughout the world, but special descriptions of their teeth went to dentists, of their watches to jewelers, of their eyeglasses to oculists and of their literary tastes to librarians. They were captured in 1927 after a search that cost \$500,000.

Cheetahs, or hunting leopards, owned by the princes and other wealthy men of India, spend their sleeping and other inactive hours on their own individual beds, which are exactly like those used by the natives. In the palace of the Maharaja of Kolhapur is a large room that contains the beds of 35 of these animals.

Corrigan Pulse is an abnormality in which the incomplete closure of the aortic valve allows blood to flow backward into the heart, thereby causing the pulse to "disappear" momentarily. It is named after Dr. D. J. Corrigan (1802-1880) who lived in Dublin.—By Burton Smith, Los Angeles, California.

One of the longest recorded displays of seismic violence occurred in Japan in 1914. During the thirty hours preceding the great volcanic eruption of Sakurajima on January 12, one meteorological observatory alone recorded 417 earthquakes, or an average of one every four minutes and 19 seconds.—By Sam Thomas, Bartlesville, Oklahoma.

An inexplicable accident occurred to the liner *Principessa Jolanda* as it was being launched near Spezia in the Gulf of Genoa, Italy, on September 11, 1907. This great ship, designed to carry 1,450 passengers and a crew of 240, and with a launching value of more than \$1,000,000, went down the slipway, turned over and sank. All that was salvaged were some of the boilers.

Satrunjaya, on the Kathiawar peninsula of India, is the largest city comprised entirely of temples. It contains 863 beautiful Jain buildings that line its streets from end to end, no secular structures being allowed within its sacred walls.—By Adrienne Brown, Houston, Texas.

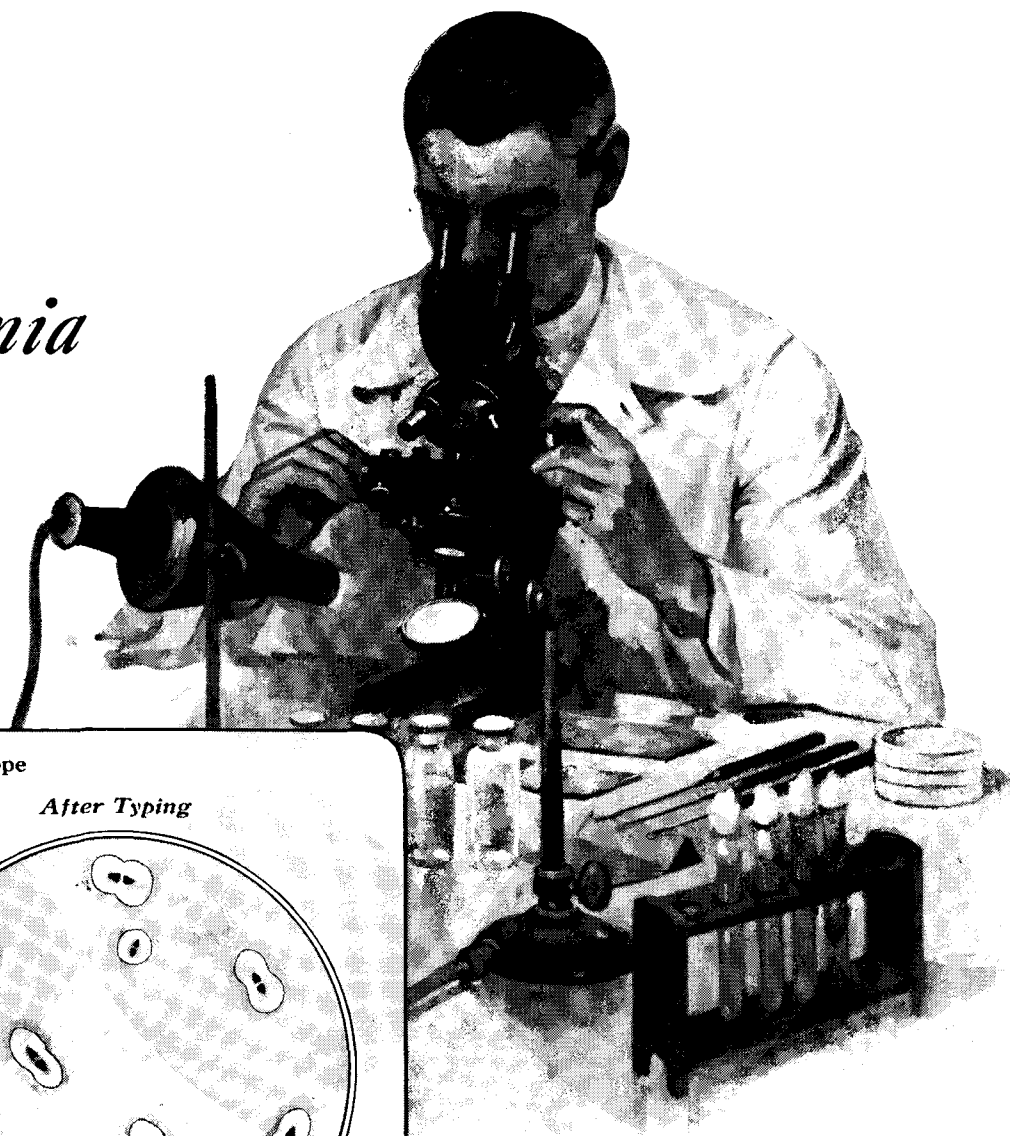
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"Typing"

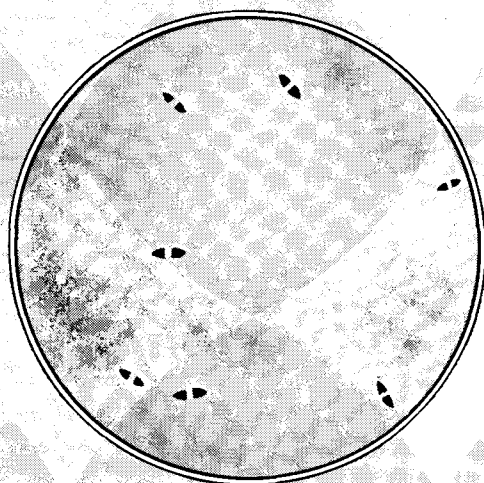
to fight Pneumonia

A laboratory equipped to identify particular "types" of pneumonia germs is the physician's ally in helping to save lives.

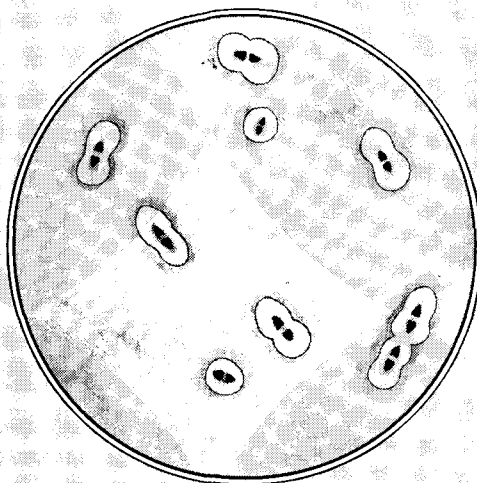


Pneumonia Germs Under Microscope

Before Typing



After Typing



Microscopic view of pneumococcus germs—principal cause of pneumonia. More than 30 types of such germs—identical in appearance—may cause pneumonia. Patient's germ-laden sputum is tested with "typing" serums, one for each type of pneumococcus.

When the "typing" serum corresponds to the type of pneumococcus in the sputum, the capsule (or covering) of the germ swells—a positive identification that tells the doctor which type of treatment serum to give the patient.

DRAMATIC progress has been made in "typing" pneumonia germs. Medical research has developed individual treatment serums for many of the "types" of pneumonia which these germs cause.

It is exceedingly important to discover pneumonia early so that sputum may be "typed" and proper serum administered promptly. If given properly and in time, these serums are highly effective in combatting the disease.

Medical and public health officials are bending every effort to make these serums generally available all over the country. In many cities and states they are provided at community expense to those unable to afford them.

Not all cases of pneumonia should or can have serum treatment. But all cases need prompt medical care and competent nursing. After an examination of the patient's sputum and blood, the doctor will determine the particular treatment needed.

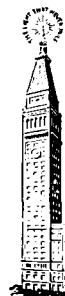
Pneumonia may strike an apparently healthy person without warning, but usually it follows a cold or grippy infection or some unusual exposure or exhaustion.

The first symptoms of pneumonia are frequently a chill, followed by a fever, with pain in the side or the chest and coughing. Any one or any combination of these symptoms indicates illness and may be pneumonia. A doctor should be called at once. Pneumonia

often works fast, and the physician must work faster to check the disease.

Winter and early spring are the months when colds and pneumonia are most frequent. If you have a severe cold, influenza, or grippe, take the precaution of resting and stay away from other people as much as possible.

Keep your vitality high with adequate nourishment and sleep. The Metropolitan booklet "Colds, Influenza, Pneumonia" gives further essential information about these diseases and their prevention and treatment. It also gives many suggestions for safeguarding winter health. Send a post card today for your free copy. Address Booklet Department 139-C.



METROPOLITAN LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY

FREDERICK H. ECKER, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD . . . ONE MADISON AVENUE, NEW YORK, N. Y. . . . LEROY A. LINCOLN, PRESIDENT

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Did you ever have a dream like this?

MOST PEOPLE have had the dream of finding money scattered around, and picking it up hurriedly for fear some one would come along and take it away.

This dream, according to many psychologists, betrays a subconscious anxiety about the future, a fear of becoming suddenly poor. Is it

any wonder that the dream is so common?

But no such fears need haunt the man whose life and property are insured wisely and well. For he knows that both his own and his family's futures are provided for, by the simplest and safest means of protection known today.

You can achieve the same security, by con-

sulting a trained, experienced Travelers representative. Moral: Insure in The Travelers. All forms of insurance.

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Christmas Feast

By Kathleen Norris

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ILLUSTRATED BY HARRY MORSE MEYERS

**Molly Kiernan met the man
she hated and found the peace
she thought she'd lost forever**

"COME in, whoever ye are!" the woman gasped, against the wild rage and uproar of the storm. She dragged at the man's wet, stooped shoulder, pushed him in, pressed the door back upon the blackness and wetness of the night. "Get over there to the stove," she directed him. "Whatever were ye doin' out in a night like this? What's come to you, anyways?"

He could not answer. He stood tottering, swaying, trying for breath. His head hung forward, almost as if his neck were broken; his dripping clothes were layers of filthy cloth upon inner layers of filthy cloth. She could hear his hoarse, hard breathing, pulled in irregular spasms from his contracted lungs. Returning vitality was an agony to him. He writhed in the chair into which she pressed him, clamped his thin, dirty hands against his temples.

Mollie Kiernan went to the stove that lurked in the background of the badly lighted cabin room and brought forward a teapot. Its contents were no longer hot, but she poured them into a cup, found sugar and cream, presented the faintly steaming mixture at his elbow. By the time he had gulped the drink she had a slab of buttered bread ready. He devoured it in silence.

She saw now that his left arm was wrapped in blood- and mud-soaked rags. She saw that he was not old, not more than thirty-five or so, and thin and sick-looking.

"Get out of thim clothes," she suddenly commanded, returning from a trip to the adjoining bedroom with a man's shirt and some blue jeans on her arm. "T'row thim dir'ty things there in a heap; I'll put thim into the shed. I've flannels here. Dry off wit' the towel and see do the old shoes fit ye. These—these was worn by a big feller. Do as I tell ye, now; I'll not watch ye. I'll be gettin' me fire started and maybe an egg cooked for ye."

She went off into the shadows in the back of the room and busied herself at the stove. She had broken three eggs into sizzling bacon fat when a hoarse gentle voice beside her made her start. "I can put these into the shed for you," her visitor was saying timidly, "an' I could wipe up the floor for ye. I did it for Mamma many's the time."

"Open that dure and give thim a toss," she directed, "an' you can let the dog in now. I shut him in there befor I'd open



He was so silent, so help-
less, so anxious to be use-
ful, he was company
when the two let
him pass go by, and at
last he sat down, and did not
exchange a single word

the dure to ye, that he'd not knock ye down wit' his joompin'."

While he ravenously went at his eggs and bacon she mopped the puddled floor behind him with a mop that looked as if it could clean nothing. When it suited her she put the mop away, and came to sit in a low rocker beside the fire.

The man was spent now, and the food and warmth and shelter suddenly affected him. He lay back in the shabby low chair, rested his still wet head, closed his eyes. When she presently questioned him he answered without opening them.

"Where'd ye come from?"

"Dutch River."

"Ye tuk a funny night for it," she said simply.

"I got lost," he confessed. "I thought I was takin' the White Flat turn. I thought I seen the lights. But I got lost over toward where Petrie's used to be." He opened his eyes, pale blue eyes in a white face. "I used to live hereabouts," he said. "And since Ma died I've been sick, and I lamed my leg so's I couldn't work very good. So I come back thinkin' maybe someone'd give me a break."

"Ye was in the hospital," she surmised, reading the unhealthy color aright.

"Yes'm. I been in for three months with something the matter with the bone of my knee. I won't ever walk right. But there's lots of things I can do."

"I don't know what they'd be!" she muttered, half to herself. "Was you in jail the whole three years, Lin?" she added after a silence.

The man straightened himself, staring at her with a sort of terror in his eyes.

"Yes," she said. "I know ye! Ye chose a funny place to come home to, didn't ye?"

"No foolin'," he whispered without moving his eyes or a muscle of his body.

"I knew ye whin I give ye the eggs," Mollie Kiernan said.

"I'd not have bothered you. I'd have got to somewheres else if it had kilt me," Lin Sallet said, still in the same sharp frightened whisper.

"It don't matter!" she said wearily, not looking at him, looking into the fire, with her wrinkled chin cupped in her claw of a hand. And for a long time there was silence in the room, while the storm battered and cracked outside.

"Time was," Mollie Kiernan recommenced, "whin I prayed God my eyes wud niver see sight or sound of ye again, Lin Sallet. But it's all gone by now, an' it's like ye'd have died out there the night, if ye hadn't found me. So God's hand's in it, after all."

H E HAD tipped his head back and closed his eyes again. Now he straightened up, and turned his tragic haggard face toward her.

"I'd 'a' gone somewhere else," he said, with feeble determination. "I wouldn't 'a' hurt you. I guess you don't see much except that courtroom when you look at me. I guess you've been tryin' to forget that."

"I've been tryin' to forget it all," she said. "But there's no forgettin' anything."

"I never would 'a' done nothin' to hurt George," the man offered. "He was always awful kind to me, and you, too."

"You run wit' thim Kimper boys, an' so he had to run wit' thim," Mollie said, in a faraway tone, and with eyes fixed on space.

"We never run much with them. They's older than we was," Lin said, sudden feverish color blazing on his white face.

"He run once too often!" she answered grimly. "All they had to tell him was to take Mr. Kane Buckholt's big car—that was enough for Jarge. Machinery, and him runnin' it, that's all he wanted from the time he cud ride a kiddy-car! An' he was all I had."

She said the last words in an undertone, got to her feet and left the room. A moment later, when she returned, her arms were filled with old blankets and a ticking pillow.

"Me spare room's an icebox," she said briefly, "so I'll boonk ye out here for the night, forninst the fire. If ye want me, rap on me dure. I'll be up ear'rly, and catch the Swede goin' into town and see shud ye have a dochter for that ar'm ye've got on ye."

"It's all right," he said, in a tone hoarse with apology and gratitude and embarrassment. He was on his feet now, and fumbling feebly to help her. Competently, her short little pipestems of arms whirled the sheets about; his bed was made on the collapsed old couch; she caught the ticking of the pil-

low in fierce old yellowed teeth and slipped on the linen cover. She laid a nightshirt on the bed.

He pulled off his shirt at her command, and she squinted at him through her iron-rimmed spectacles.

"Ye knew the kind they was, thim Kimpers," she said. For fifteen years she had said it to herself almost every hour. "What came over the lads entirely?" she had mused, in bitter sickness of spirit. "Sure, they knew thim Kimpers was a bad lot!"

"They says they wasn't going to hurt Peters. They says they was only after his money," he said wretchedly. She had seen him in court, fifteen years earlier, with that same shamed and bewildered look. She had heard him say those same words in that same voice. The officers' bullets had killed her George, at the time of the capture; the Kimpers had been hanged. Only this unhappy boy had survived that frightful hot July tragedy. And because he had not owned the gun or held the gun, because he had been frightened into sharing their fatal last adventure with them, young Lin Sallet had been given a sentence of three years. But before the crowds, the excitement, the very dust of the lonely road at the Bend had died away, the

strong, beautiful, loving, vital creature who had been her George had been laid in his dishonored grave.

The Kimpers and Lin Sallet had kidnaped Allen Peters, roadmaster, on his way to pay monthly salaries, and George Kiernan had stolen Kane Buckholt's big car and had met them at the crossroads. There Peters had been killed, and there, five minutes later, when the sheriff's car had come shrieking up, George's body, with three bullets through the heart, had toppled over Peters' body. The Kimpers and Lin Sallet had been brought back to town for arrest and trial, and Mollie Kiernan had run, screaming, the long mile to the crossroads and had claimed the warm insensate thing with the closed eyes and the sealed lips—the son who had been teasing her at breakfast, the son into whose room she had crept the night before, as every night, to kiss, and kneel beside to say her prayers.

T HAT desperate run in the summer heat, those piercing screams pouring madly from her even when neighbors caught at her and laid her on the ground, and sponged her face and her wild hair, had



The superintendent had shouted,
"Could you keep this kid until after-
noon? I've got to get over to Benders"

orn the last violence of her life from Mollie Kiernan. The flesh had dropped from her bones, after George's death; the color had fled her face. Her hair was thin now, and pure white, and her hands trembled faintly whenever she must meet someone, speak to someone.

She had sold the two town cottages that had supplied her with an income, and had come up here into the mountains, where she farmed a lonely hundred acres herself, occasionally driving into town long before dawn with tomatoes or prunes or a calf to sell, 'doin' her tradin'," as she called it, inconspicuously and quickly. On Sundays she came no farther than the convent that stood a mile outside the city, creeping into a back pew for early Mass, gone before even the kind sisters could greet her.

These distant contacts with her kind were all she had had courage to face since the horror of George's going. And so tonight to have the storm bring her this man of all men, this Lin Sallet who had been the very instrument of George's tragedy, was an event of cyclonic proportions. Her whole body was shaken by it; she lay awake shaking, and measuring the old

loves and the old hates, the old passions and despairs, throughout the stormy night.

For four days the winds and the rains had their way, and the roads were washed from the hills, and the valley meadows were wide sheets of water. Afterward, when a watery December sun came out, it shone on a changed world. Mollie and her guest, too, had their hands full with repairing the immediate ravages of the tempest. They dragged wet wood into the kitchen to dry; they turned the two cows loose on the hills; they brought a mother hen and her brood indoors for warmth and safety. Lin swept masses of wet leaves from the dooryard steps; gathered blown boughs from the corral. There was no talk between them of his coming or his going. He was there, and she cooked for him and made his bed silently.

THANKFULLY, and in silence as complete as her own, he accepted her shelter. He was evidently worn down with weariness and sickness and uncertainty; he did not question the chance that brought him here to the one roof in the world that owed him least.

Weak, wicked Lin Sallet, she would think, as he

pottered along beside her over dishwashing or scrubbing, raking out stalls or digging runnels in the demolished roads. He had been her glorious George's evil genius from the beginning. George, two years younger than Lin, had thought Lin marvelous. "Gee, Mom, that Lin Sallet can do anything!" George had said, not once but many times. George's square, sweated, eighteen-year-old figure had frequently been seen around town beside the lurching lean one of Lin. Lin had never seemed to go to school at all; George had made a poor scholar, and had presently given over schooling for the comparative excitements of existence as extra boy in Foster's Garage. And it was from this garage that George Kiernan had stolen Kane Buckholt's car on the July day that had been the last of his life. He had driven it up to the Bend, where it had been ambushed with the Kimpers' car.

The Kimpers, Earl and Bud, murderers and desperadoes, had had Lin Sallet with them. Lin had been the one to walk out into the apparently deserted road and signal Allen Peters, when the roadmaster came along, as always on the month's first Thursday, with his sack of money from (*Continued on page 41*)



Old Folks Preferred

By Walter Davenport

CARTOON BY D. R. WITZPATRICK

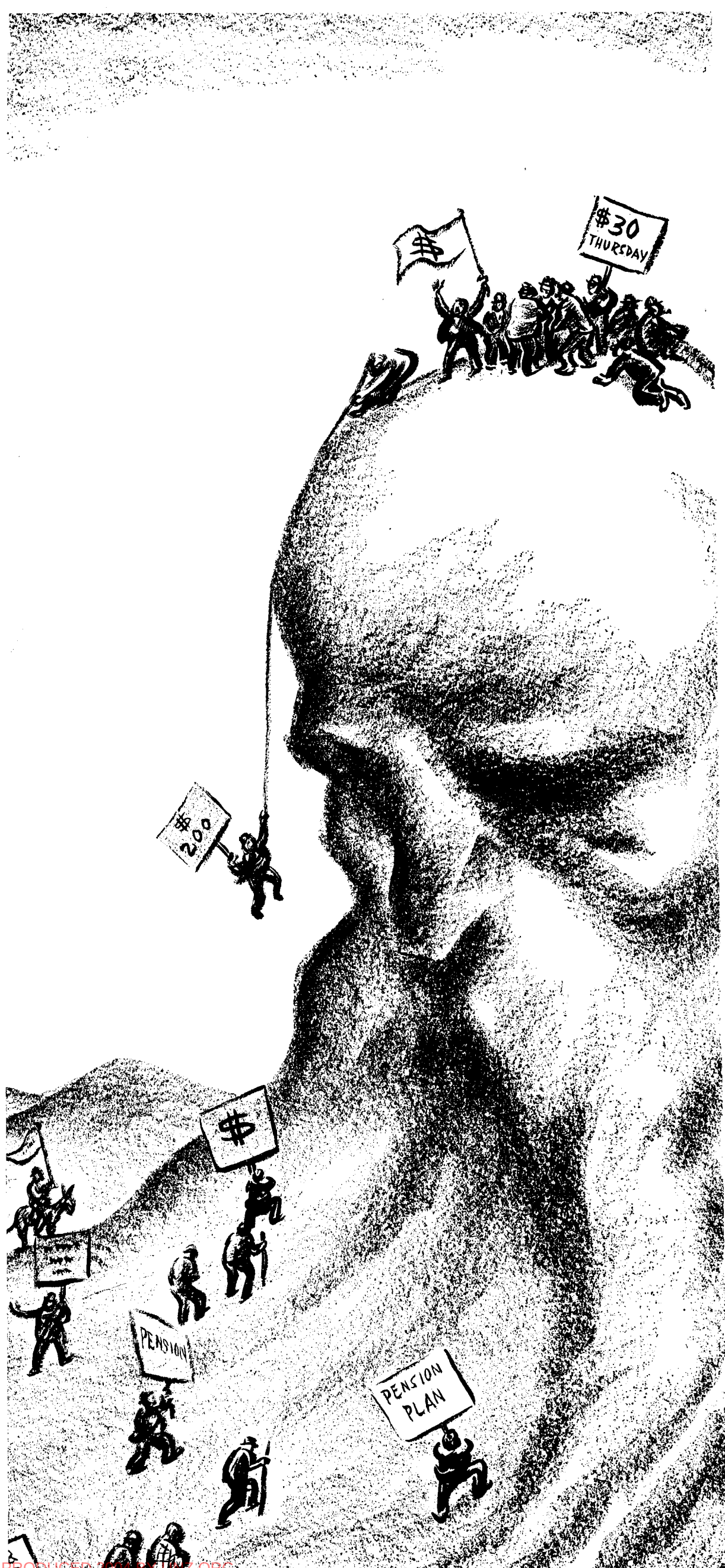
Step up close, venerable friends! You are about to be rewarded with handsome pensions with which to live in comfort in your sunset years. All you have to do, dear senior citizens, is to watch the generous politicians manipulate the little shells. Then, mothers and fathers of America, you have but to guess which shell the little pea is under. This shell, dear ones, is the Townsend Plan; this one the General Welfare Plan; and this one Social Security. Step up, beloved oldsters!

IN ONE of the smaller rooms of a small hotel in Washington, Mr. Theodore Ball Giles sat on a sway-back bed rummaging through his brief case for a letter from the Honorable Jim Davis of Pennsylvania. Fortunately, he didn't find it. However, said Mr. Giles, he would soon have an office in a large office building where his papers would be kept in files and be always immediately available.

Mr. Giles is the president-founder of the United Pension Plans. He has no board of directors. There is no vice-president nor secretary. There is no treasurer, although Mr. Giles hopes one day to take over that office himself—if and when a few funds should roll in. He apologized for having no more imposing headquarters than his hotel room but bade us wait. The trouble with being so modestly equipped, he said, was that it was difficult to convince people that out of such small beginnings was to come the solution of virtually all the country's taxation and monetary ills.

Briefly, Mr. Giles, who comes, as you might suspect, from Los Angeles, is anxious to combine all the country's variegated old-age pension schemes but chiefly the Townsend Plan and the General Welfare Bill. Incidentally, Mr. Giles is no lone wolf; at least a dozen other sanguine gentlemen are in Washington at the moment with similar aspirations.

Properly organized, Mr. Giles might go far. He could count, for example, upon about a hundred and fifty members of the new Congress for support. About that many are now descending upon Washington pledged directly and indirectly to do something handsome for the old folks but not at all sure what it will be. Some were elected by the votes of wistful oldsters who yearn for thirty dollars every Thursday. And some won by shouting themselves hoarse for a hundred dollars a month and free rent for everybody over fifty. Dr. Francis E. Townsend, the beloved Uncle Mose, has just told us that sixty-one brand-new Republicans in Congress are either pledged to his plan or will fight to bring it again to the voting stage. The doctor, looking much more cheerful than we've seen him in months, went on to say that a hundred and fifty-one of the two hundred and forty candidates he had supported were elected. Moreover, he had captured the entire congressional representation of nine states—Maine, Oregon, Florida, Montana, North and South Dakota, New Hampshire, Wyoming and Arizona. The doctor had never heard of Mr. Giles and made it rather clear that he was just as well satisfied. At the moment the doctor is much more concerned



with what to do to make life intolerable for his rival pension organization, the General Welfare Federation of America.

Nor was Mr. Giles welcome in the federation's office. The federation, about which we shall speak in some detail in a moment, denies that Doctor Townsend has a hundred and fifty-one members of Congress pawing the ground in their anxiety to obey his will. It claims that it has those earmarked patriots eager to vote for the federation's own legislation. So we may as well forget Mr. Giles. Lofty as his aims may be, he'll get nowhere—just as twenty-one prophets of twenty-one plans and schemes in twenty-one states got nowhere in the November elections.

Therefore you may as well be prepared for the battle that soon will rage in and around Congress. It is possible that you've never heard of the General Welfare Federation and its old-age carryall, the General Welfare Bill. But don't despair. Before Congress has reached the nuisance stage you'll hear almost too much about it. It is causing the White House more concern than any member of its numerous family. It has forced the Social Security Board to draft liberalizing amendments to the Social Security Act. You'll hear all about it the moment the board goes to Congress with these amendments in hand.

The General Welfare Bill is what the horse-racing racket calls a sleeper. It has been kept in the stable groomed and conditioned against the time when, with distance, track and opposition to its liking, it will be turned loose. Of course it may never get away from the barrier in the pension sweepstakes. Or it might conceivably gallop through a lobby-cowed Congress and die in the stretch—in the White House. It will, of course, be denounced by the tradition-defenders as just another screwball scheme. But it may turn out to be the oft-predicted key to a strange new economic era which the silo economists and the prophets of alfalfa money have tried unsuccessfully to launch since the days of the Populists.

It was written in secrecy by despairing Townsendites seeking a popular pension front, and it may win the apprehensive votes of those whose hatred of all such schemes is surpassed only by their fear of something more fantastic. Uncle Mose Townsend started something. The lean old two-hundred-dollars-a-month soothsayer has lived to see the field he so industriously cultivated choked with pension marijuana. His numerous followers, although regarding him as a major prophet, are all out of line, listening hungrily and vociferously to every new voice that shouts of greater and easier largess. Hundreds of thousands of them have joined everything, leaping like mountain goats from scheme to scheme, from plan to plan, from California Jonahs and Oklahoma Daniels to Minnesota Joshuas. Uncle Mose is fighting the General Welfare Bill as savagely as he applauded it before \$200 a month was amended out of it; but his people will swarm to it if and when it comes up for voting.

Uncle Mose Walks Out

When it became apparent to Uncle Mose that his original bill—the McGroarty bill—was not going anywhere, he solicited one of his most dependable lieutenants, Mr. Arthur L. Johnson, to write something that wouldn't frighten the national legislature quite so much. Mr. Johnson was no upstart in such matters. For eighteen years he had been attorney for the California State Labor Department, drafting many of that solemn body's sounder laws. Signifying his faith in Mr. Johnson, Dr. Townsend appointed him his chief congressional lobbyist.

But when Mr. Johnson had finished his drafting, the doctor began to regret. Not only did Mr. Johnson's title—the General Welfare Bill—displease Uncle Mose but something like three hundred changes had been written into the original script. And the doctor was even less pleased when at a meeting of his famous steering committee of pledged representatives Mr. Johnson's version was further revised and amended—and declared acceptable. Worst of all, they abandoned the two per cent transactions tax and substituted a gross income tax of two per cent. The General Welfare Bill would levy this two per cent upon everybody having a gross income of \$600 and upward. And the sum of this exaction would be distributed pro rata monthly to all citizens who had arrived at the ripe age of sixty. In Mr. Johnson's bill

all reference to \$200 a month was eliminated. And here he and Uncle Mose separated in an unseemly squabble.

The doctor insisted that the popular "pulling power" of the \$200 clause was all-important, that \$200 was the goal even if unattainable immediately. The clause went back into the bill or Dr. Townsend would walk out. In vain did his earmarked congressmen plead with him. To no avail whatever were the arguments of his cabinet. The doctor walked out and there was nothing for the fatherless steering committee—the pledged congressmen—to do but to ask Mr. Johnson to carry on where the doctor had left off. From outside, the doctor, accusing his congressmen of treachery and Mr. Johnson of treason, warned all and sundry against supporting or even speaking kindly of the Johnson product.

Nevertheless Mr. Johnson opened Washington offices and set up the General Welfare Federation of America. He made himself secretary and the Reverend Mr. Thomas E. Boorde of Washington, an ex-Townsender and an important voice in the missionary boards of the Baptist Church, president. Mr. Boorde told us that the new bill would pay pensions of at least sixty to seventy-five dollars a month to all over sixty. And more than that later.

The Cure for All Our Ills

Mr. Boorde is a small, gray, eager gentleman who once regarded Uncle Mose with considerable reverence but now speaks of him more in sorrow than in anger. By no means as practical nor as aware of the world's ways as Mr. Johnson, Mr. Boorde believes that the General Welfare Bill would arouse none of the baser human traits other pension laws inspire—hoarding, falsifying birth certificates, hiding and transferring personal means, supporting ineligible, cultivating undertaker rackets, and so on.

Indeed, Mr. Boorde assured us that there would be no necessity for anybody's dissembling his income because every citizen would receive his or her pension regardless of personal income.

"Mr. Morgan, Mr. Ford, Mr. Rockefeller, Mr. . . ."

"Certainly," said Mr. Boorde. "This is not class legislation. It is a permanent recovery measure. It will create purchasing power. It will release money into the hands of those who have no spending power now because they have no money. Mr. Morgan, Mr. Ford and Mr. Rockefeller, splendid gentlemen, would co-operate and voluntarily spend like the rest of us."

"Twenty-four hours after becoming the law," went on Mr. Boorde, "the General Welfare Act will release more than a billion dollars, which will be distributed at once. This is the money now in the old-age reserve account in the United States Treasury. This money will be taken over by this act. No new bureau will be created to operate the act. The Treasury will distribute the funds. Applicants will do business through their local postoffices."

"It will be unlawful to spend or send any portion of your annuity outside the United States, to purchase any service or commodity not rendered or manufactured by a citizen of the United States, to maintain or support unreasonably and unnecessarily any able-bodied person in idleness or in drunkenness or gambling, to fail to pay one's debts. The penalties will be so great that none will dare violate the law. First offenders will lose one fourth of their pensions for life. Second offenders will lose another quarter or a half. For the third offense they will lose another quarter. Fourth offenders will forfeit their right to any pension at all."

"After the passage of this act it will be necessary for the newcomer to our shores—the newly arriving immigrant—to live in the United States twenty years before becoming eligible for a pension," said Mr. Boorde. "Pensions will be paid for three months after the death of any beneficiary to take care of his funeral expenses. We do not say that a pensioner shall spend his money in any limited time—like a month."

"Won't that encourage hoarding?" we asked. "Won't that keep much of this money out of circulation?"

"Public opinion will force people to spend their pensions," said Mr. Boorde. "The hoarder's neighbors will say to him, 'See here, you old skinflint, this is the United States of America—one for all and all for one. Do your duty like a man.' Yes, sir, public opinion is the strongest law."

"The Department of Commerce says that there are many small businesses whose profit is not greater than two per cent of their gross income," we said. "How can such businesses continue if they must pay that two per cent to the pension fund?"

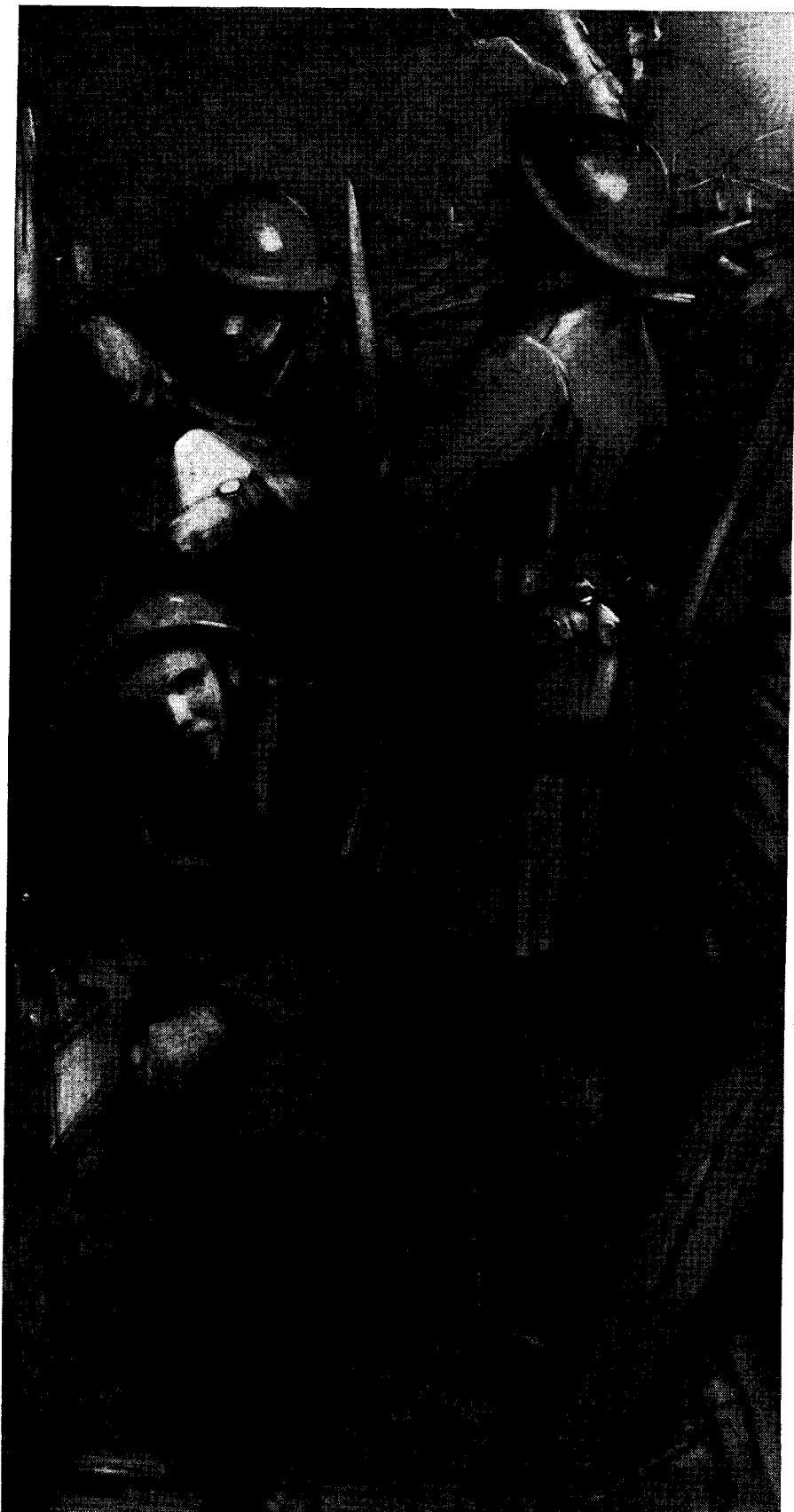
"That will be worked out." (Continued on page 30)

The new Congress will see a battle for possession of America's newest Mountain of Gold—our great mass of needy aged

A Song in France

By Walter Henry

ILLUSTRATED BY HARRY TOWNSEND



THE dugout was cold as hell. I glanced at my wrist watch. It was twenty minutes to eleven. I slipped on my trench coat; it was soggy with mud. I wiped some of the mud off. I checked my automatic just to be sure; it was loaded all right. I buckled on my belt, and went out.

The sky was bright with stars. The noise of the Verey lights, popping in the distance, did not reach me; and there was no firing. There was no sound as I groped my way down the trench outside the dugout.

The duck walk was slick with ice, and the trench was like a tunnel. I had to move slowly. When I reached the bend where I was to report, the captain was waiting for me. He said: "All set, Sergeant?"

I said: "All set, Captain." And we started.

The captain led the way. There were men scattered up and down the trench. I could just make out their outlines in the darkness. They didn't say a word, they didn't move, as we passed them.

We felt our way, zigzagging with the trench, for about a mile. After a while we had plenty of light; the sky ahead was alive with bursting Vereys. As we walked, I thought of the job that lay before me. God knows, I didn't want to think about that job; but I couldn't forget it. I guess what I needed was a shot of cognac. I didn't have any cognac. . . . I slogged along, thinking of that damned job. . . .

We reached the spot we had picked that morning. It was a bay, in the last trench you'd reach before you hit the Germans. There was one man, a private, in the bay. He was a tall man, and he was standing on the firing step, staring through the wire in front of the trench. He didn't even turn his head when we stepped into the bay.

We climbed up beside the man. The Vereys, drifting down, made everything dead white. Beyond the wire was what had once been a wheat field. A hundred yards or so away we could see the German wire. Nothing was stirring; the whole place seemed frozen.

The captain shivered. He pulled his trench coat tighter. "A lovely night. . . . A lovely Christmas night. Eh, Sergeant?"

I gave him a shrug for an answer.

Then, in that cold silence, we heard it. At first it came to us very softly—so softly that we wondered if we really heard it. Then it grew louder, and we

knew—every man within earshot in that double line of trenches knew—that someone was singing. Here, at the front, on Christmas night, some soldier—some German soldier, with a clear tenor voice—was singing "*Heilige Nacht!*"

We stood there listening, the three of us. I could hear the private breathing hard. . . . The song ended. The last low words died away: "*Sleep in heavenly peace.*"

No one moved.

The man by my side coughed. I looked at him. His face, in the shadow of his helmet, was white and tense. I caught his eye.

"Anything wrong?" I asked. I had a pretty good hunch that something was wrong; my guess was that he was either ill or very cold.

The man stared at me as though he didn't see me. Then he said: "I'm all right, Sergeant."

Before I could say anything, he straightened his shoulders, raised his head, and began to sing. He had a good baritone, and it carried:

*"Silent night . . . Holy night,
All is calm. All is bright. . . ."*

As he started the second verse, the German across the way joined in; and after that they sang the song together, those two men, to the end. And it was beautiful. . . .

SILENCE again. I glanced at my watch. One minute to twelve. I turned to the singer. He was seated, his head bowed, on the firing step.

"That was good," I said.

"Thank you, Sergeant," he said quietly. "That man over there is Johann Lieber, the best friend I ever had. . . . He was my singing teacher, in Munich."

A shell—the first we had heard for twenty-four hours—whined over us. Another came. And another. It was twelve o'clock. Christmas was over. And the old stuff was on again.

I spoke to the captain. Then I walked over to the corner of the bay, and found the switch. I stood there. I kept my eye on my watch. At five minutes past twelve I pulled the switch. It worked, as we sappers knew it would. There was a sharp, stinging blast. The earth about us trembled. The German trenches beyond that field went up in a vast burst of flame.

As I pulled that switch, I tried not to think of Johann Lieber.

As he started the second verse, the German across the way joined in; and after that they sang the song together, those two men, to the end. And it was beautiful

A SHORT SHORT STORY COMPLETE ON THIS PAGE

Sidewalk Show

By
Howard and Sue Whitman

That crowd over there isn't watching a street fight; it's peering into a store window. At what is it gazing? At the latest stunt of the window-display boys, who put on free shows daily—with cash results over the counter

THE curb art marts of Paris can make a bow to everyday goings-on along the sidewalks of New York's Fifth Avenue. You don't find bearded Bohemians hawking their canvases but what you do find is the greatest conglomeration of strictly modern art ever devoted to the fattening of smart merchants' pocketbooks.

Window display has arrived. With a vengeance this business of displaying wares to a popeyed public has become a subtle, highly technical form of psychological wizardry, a polished art of seeing that Mme. Consumer and her cash are parted in the most pleasing of manners.

As recently as the days when you were toddling in rompers, it was considered fine for the big-town stores to slap as much stuff in the windows as would leave room for the price tags, and small-town merchants contented themselves in piling their choicest items on the entrance steps and sidewalk. Today you're not amazed to find a Bonwit Teller window sporting the surrealism of Salvador Dali; a Bergdorf-Goodman window with bird cages, legless pianos and sheet-music mannequins all united in a Chopin theme; a Saks-Fifth Avenue window peopled by Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs; a Macy window full of music boxes playing audible tunes, or a Lord and Taylor display without a stitch of merchandise, just a series of gigantic chiming bells.

The smart men in executive offices know that you've got to spend money to make it. Macy earmarks \$100,000 a year to maintain a display department with a staff of twenty. Lord and Taylor, when gaga over one particular idea, will spend \$2,000 on a single window. Bonwit Teller doles out \$550 every week to pay for props, ideas, knickknacks and the like.

The fact that a latest hobby of sophisticated New York is window-gazing may be considered some sort of tribute to the new endeavor.

London has its Changing of the Guards—New York its changing of the windows. Small cliques of arty folk have been known to head for Fifth Avenue to get first peek on any given night when new windows are being set. These diligent first-nighters are swelled by throngs who go out of their way while strolling, to see, say, what Bonwit's is up to this week.

With the New York World's Fair in the offing, the gaping fad is slated for bullish days. And even you, friend, may find yourself among the visiting pop-eyes who take a fling at what is a big outdoor sport in Gotham today.

The theme is the trick of it. Displayers have learned to tie up with momentary interests, to concoct windows that tell a story, to cash in on a bright new trend, to grab onto a current event. Example: Saks in November ran Otello windows, linked to the opening opera of the Metropolitan season.

Fancy windows don't just grow. Even the birth of an idea is merely a surface scratch. There are props to consider.

Tom Lee, the twenty-eight-year-old mentor at Bonwit Teller, once wanted his window décor to take



LEO AARONS

Famed among Fifth Avenue's beautiful shop windows are Lord and Taylor's Christmas bells

the form of Botticelli cherubs. He whipped downtown and returned in a taxi with two dozen baby dolls, purchased for seven dollars a dozen. These were painted chartreuse, gilded and endowed with plaster hair. In a few days they were floating around the Fifth Avenue windows in as much glory as if they had sprung from Botticelli's brush, cherubs instead of mamma dolls.

"Imagine my guffaws," says Tom, "to find that admirers were writing in with offers to buy my cherubs at a high price, thinking they must have come from some fine old Italian gallery!"

Secondhand stores in Brooklyn are a fertile source. If Tom's prop list calls for an Edwardian wicker chair, a Queen Anne taper, a Directoire chandelier or a pair of Gay Nineties bloomers, chances are the items can be had. Tom keeps a hawk-eye handy, one Edward Ballenger, who knows every secondhand store from the Bronx to Jamaica Bay.

"I'm ready to be stumped every week. I may have

to chase after feathers one day and coal the next," says Tom. He's made a poodle out of powder puffs and a seal out of patent leather.

Window gazers are quick to fall in love with fancy props, keeping Tom's phone busy with requests for used items to make centerpieces for their dinner tables, knickknacks for their libraries or bits of froufrou for their gardens.

An effervescent dowager recently phoned to bid for a monstrous yellow fish made of rope, employed as Tom's expression of the tropical motif. She thought it would look ducky in her aquarium. A few minutes later the New York Anglers' Club phoned in a huff to find out what kind of fish Tom thought it was and to inform him pedantically that no such fish ever existed.

It takes about eleven seconds to pass a window. John Riley at Bergdorf-Goodman, impressed with this fact, wants to reach out and grab Dame Consumer by the ears. "Rivet attention (*Continued on page 49*)



Mister Mack was not a hundred years old, but Giles knew he was too old to stand the work required of a river-bottom cotton cropper

East Wind Blows in the Valley

By Roark Bradford

ILLUSTRATED BY WILLIAM MEADE PRINCE

Yes, sir, love sho' is potent down at Little Bee Bend. But so is money. Amen!

IN PERMITTING Mister Mack to settle on Little Bee Bend, Giles violated one of the traditional rules of the cotton plantation over which he presided as foreman. Before Mister Mack and his wife were halfway to the cabin on the dredged ditch to which Giles assigned them, the foreman was apologizing to the Widow Duck for breaking the rule.

"He jest wawked up," Giles explained, "him and his woman, standin' right in de rain, wet and raggedy, and axed me is I'm name' Mister Giles. And when I told him I was, he 'lowed he was name' Mack. And befo' de words dried, I was tellin' him, 'Hy-dy, Mister Mack.' Mister!"

The Widow Duck was frying homemade pork sausages over the coals, and on such a cold, wet day she was more interested in her cooking than in the foreman's complaint.

"Hit seem all right to me," she commented. "'Mister' is de handle for any man's name. Dey puts a handle on a skillet and I reckon mankind is good as a skillet."

Giles chuckled. "Dis Mister Mack is sho' black as a skillet," he told her. "Only not so shiny, even when he wet. Jest de pyore D. But not his woman."

"She a brown-skin, hunh?" the Widow Duck asked without much interest.

"Yep," said Giles. "'Bout ha'fway betwixt a frail and a gingerbread, I reckon you'd call her. Good-lookin' gal. Long-laigged and put up like a mule."

He laughed. "Efn I didn't know myse'f so good, I might figger I gived 'em de cabin on de grudge ditch on account er how good-lookin' she was."

The Widow Duck laughed, too. It was a good joke and they both enjoyed it. The Widow Duck raked a yam from the ashes and handed it to the foreman. "Chaw on dis," she offered, "and tell me mo' 'bout dis hyar Mister Mack."

GILES studied his mind while he was peeling and cooling the yam. "You know good as me," he stated, "dat de rule say a man got to do a day's work in de field befo' he kin move in a house. And hit's a good rule, too. 'Cause dat give me a chance to see is a man got anything to his mus-tash befo' I lets him start a crop. I puts a new man behind a fou'teen-inch middle buster wid old Hawk and Eagle and Lightnin' on de front end. And efn he kin wawk outn de field, come sundown, after he has been drug through tough Johnson grass roots all day by dem three big mules—well, his mus-tash is long enough to make a crop for me."

"Whyn't you try him, quick as hit git dry enough?"

Giles shook his head. "He couldn't make hit. He too old. I didn't ax him but he look like he might be a hund'ed years old, standin' out in de rain wid his head back, lookin' square at me, and tellin' me 'bout hisse'f. He says he come f'm around Ringgold. He say he got thirty acres of his own, up in de hills, but de times got so tight he jest couldn't make a livin' for him and his woman no more. He said dey leveled on his mules and dey leveled on his wagons and plows. So he tuck his wife and lit out for de Red River bottoms. He say he was bawn down dis way."

"Maybe he comes home to die," suggested the Widow Duck.

"Nope," Giles assured her. "He ain't fixin' to die."

"Did he had any plunder wid him?"

"His wife—he call her Pauline when he speak her name—she had a little bundle er clothes and stuff. And he had a pitcher of him and Pauline de day dey got married up. He had dat pitcher and a Bible wropped up in a piece er oilcloth."

"Bible sound good," observed the Widow Duck. "Do his woman look old like him, too?"

"Naw, she young," the foreman said. "You know how dat goes. A man work and save and buy him a little place, and git hisse'f in good shape. And den—"

"Yeah," she interrupted with a snort, "and den he git restless. And any time you shake a little cawn de pig'll come a-runnin'."

"Well, anyway," Giles concluded, rising, "I'll send Dock around wid de truck to pick up some stuff for 'em. Dey ain't got nothin'."

"I'll give 'em a sack er 'taters," the Widow Duck volunteered. "Efn his wife was old and 'cropit like him, I'd send some fresh meat. But 'taters is all dat Jezybel is gittin' f'm me."

MISTER MACK was not a hundred years old. But Giles knew that he was too old to stand the vigorous work required of a river-bottom cotton cropper, day after day. But if Mister Mack knew it he gave no indication. The first day it was dry enough to resume winter plowing Mister Mack came to the lot before daylight, just as the rest of the share-croppers did. And even in the semidarkness everybody saw that he walked straight and dignified, offering no apologies for his age.

"You ketch dat pair er old mules," Giles instructed. "Dat's Gray and Grapevine. You'll find dey gears in de gear room. And den you hook 'em to de fust stawk-cutter you comes to."

Mister Mack drew himself up and stood eye to eye with the foreman's six feet three. "Mister Giles," he said, "when I moved on de place I told you I c'd make a crop. I ain't young like some 'er yo' people but I'm still a man. I'm six foot tall and better, and I takes my work like de rest of 'em. I never axed for a easy job in my life, and I ain't fixin' to start now. Give me a job, and I promises you a day's work. I ain't never yit went back on my promises."

Giles was boiling. He wanted to order the old man to the man-killing job of plowing Eagle, Hawk and Lightning to a middle splitter, but before he realized it he was saying, "Mister Mack, when I puts a man on a job, he don't gen'ly argy back wid me. I'm too busy to tell one man to do de same thing two times."

Mister Mack sat upon the stalk-cutter seat and drove the old slow team with the same dignity with which he had objected to the easy job offered him. He had little to say about himself, yet he was friendly with everybody. Giles overcame the slight embarrassment he felt when he called him "Mister." And when the Widow Duck learned that he could sing bass and "amen" the preacher at the proper time, she



With Mister Mack giving the bride away, B'r Charlie joined Pauline and Dave in matrimony

was so happy that she even softened her attitude toward Mister Mack's young wife.

"Jezzybel married up wid Old King Ahab, didn't she?" the Widow Duck inquired of B'r Charlie, the preacher.

"Dat's what *she* claim," the preacher stated.

"De p'int is," persisted the Widow Duck, "Mister Mack ain't no Old King Ahab, and he married up wid Pauline. So I reckon dat don't make Pauline no Jezzybel."

"Mister Mack don't ack like Old King Ahab," B'r Charlie admitted. "And I ain't seen Pauline do nothin' but strictly mind her business."

It was not until the first Sunday in January that the Widow Duck got a spiritual line on Mister Mack and his young wife. The first Sunday of each month was devoted to testimonials of faith and experiences from the members. Each testifying member would "pitch" a song suitable to what he wanted to say, and the congregation joined in. At the conclusion of the song, the sinner related his experiences.

Pauline was among the first to testify. She patted her foot four times to set the tempo, and then she sang in a clear, unashamed soprano:

"Don't need no pillow when I come to die.
Don't need no pillow when I come to die,
'Cause de Lawd a-gonna take me in His arms
And shelter me f'm de stawms."

After the congregation had sung a dozen verses, Pauline testified. "Faith," she stated, "gonter be my pillow."

"Well, amen," said the Widow Duck, surprised. "Hit'll do hit ev'y time."

"When I married up wid my husband, ten years ago," Pauline went on, "us was blessed wid plenty and us waxed fat in de land. But de Lawd tried us, and now us is jest like old Job, layin' back up in de ashes. Us ain't got hardly nothin', and us owes for dat. So I want all my Christern friends to pray for me."

The Widow Duck was impressed by the simple, modest confession. It left a heap unsaid that the Widow Duck would have liked to know, but more could not well have been said in a testimonial of faith.

MISTER MACK waited until several others spoke, and then, after a moderate pause, his bass voice boomed out his theme:

"Oh, de East Wind blows in de Valley,
And de West Wind blows in de Valley,
And de bones come a-jumpin' over bones, dry bones,
And de bones come a-jumpin' over bones,
Oh, dry bones, won't you rise and prophesy?"

When the song died out, Mister Mack stood up, and as he talked he backed toward the "Amen" corner so he could face both preacher and congregation.

"I reads in my Bible," he stated, "whar 'Zekiel went out amongst de people to prophesy. But 'Zekiel was a old man and he had old notions in his haid. So de people didn't like dat. So dey led him out to de graveyard, and dey say, 'Prophesy over dese old bones, efn you feel like you got to prophesy.'"

"But dat didn't weary 'Zekiel. He told 'em, he say, 'Y'all think I'm so old I can't prophesy over nothin' but old bones? Look, I'm gonter make dese hyar bones rise up and prophesy!'"

"And he done hit, too," seconded the Widow Duck. "Amen!"

"I ain't 'Zekiel," went on Mister Mack, "but I'm a old man. I'm too old in my years to make a cotton crop in dis Johnson grass. I ain't foolin' nobody about dat. But I promised I was gonter make a crop, and I'm gonter make one. Hyar me, Church! I'm gonter make dat cotton crop. Dat's on account er I promised Pauline, hyar, ten years ago, I was gonter take keer of her. I stood up and promised her I'd keep her in somethin' to eat and somethin' to wear."

"Well, he'p him out, Lawd," urged the Widow Duck.

"I'm a man er my promise," Mister Mack went on. "You can go back yonder to Ringgold, and ax about me. When de hard times hit me, I owed a few debts and I paid 'em, 'cause I had promised de man. I had to sell 'bout ev'ything I had, but I done hit. I ain't got a thing left but thirty acres er (Continued on page 44)

Boy Meets Gorilla

By Frank Fenton

ILLUSTRATED BY ROBERT O. REID

HIS name was Joe Crulet. He was born in the town of Hamilton, Ohio, where his old man worked in a lumberyard until one day when a big pile of railroad ties slipped and Joe became half an orphan. Sometime after that his mother met a bookmaker from Cleveland and married him. The bookmaker's name was Burger. He was fat and he loved beer. He had to get around the city a lot but he hated to drive an automobile, so he looked at Joe and said, "What grade you in, Joe?"

"The seventh," Joe said.

"You're a pretty big fink to be in school yet," Burger said. "You better get to work and drive me around town."

So Joe quit school and started to drive for Burger. He did this for two years, until the law caught up with Burger and he was sentenced to a year in the state pen. After this happened, Joe and his mother moved down to Columbus and rented a flat on Spruce Street so they could be near the pen.

When he finally got out with time off for good behavior they met him at the gate with a new pair of shoes and then headed straight for the nearest beer joint. Burger drank three bottles of beer before he said anything.

"What are you going to do now?" Joe's mother said.

"Make book," Burger said. "What the hell kind of a question is that?" He looked at Joe. "Joe," he said, "go out and get a secondhand auto. I'll be damned if you ain't grown up. How much do you weigh?"

"Two hundred and seven," Joe said.

"Okay," Burger said. "Go out and get a secondhand car for about one-fifty."

Joe stood there. "I'm leavin' town," Joe said. "I been stayin' with the old woman here till you got out."

"He's leavin' town," Burger said. "I'll be damned if he isn't leaving town. Where you going to, Joe?"

"California maybe."

"How you gonna get there?" Joe's mother said.

"I'll be damned if he isn't going to California," Burger said. "Okay, Joe, you go to California and write your old lady what you do out there."

Burger gave him the new shoes and the five dollars he had received when he left the pen. The shoes were too small, but Joe took the five dollars.

CALIFORNIA turned out to be pretty far away, a lot farther than it looked on the map.

When Joe got to Hollywood he sent a post card to Burger and the old lady. "This is a picture of Hollywood I am in now. People don't wear much or women either. A man I talked to says I will be working with him tomorrow."

The man Joe meant was Willie Hornsby. Willie had staggered drunk out of a beer parlor and tripped over the curb. Joe had picked him up and from then on Willie had bought the beers for both of them. "You're a big cluck," Willie had said. "You got a job?"

"I ain't doin' anything."

"Then you come over to the studio in the morning at six o'clock and ask for Willie Hornsby in the prop department and you go to work for me."

That night Joe slept in a little park on a copy of the Los Angeles Examiner. He lay down first and watched the searchlights sweeping the skies. About twelve o'clock they were gone and Joe figured they had quit looking for whatever it was. He was asleep when a policeman kicked his ribs about five in the morning and said, "What the hell do you think this is?"

"I got a job," Joe said.

"So have I. Get out of here," the cop replied.

Willie Hornsby remembered him. They were building a set. There were pictures of mountains and trees painted on the canvases. There was a crocodile swimming around in a little pond of water. "This is the 'Boy Meets Gorilla' set," Willie said. Joe helped him carry a huge papier-mâché rock over beside the pool. "I'm glad that ain't a rock," Willie said.

"It sure feels hollow," Joe said.

"It ain't a rock," Willie said. "Okay, now keep shut because here they come and they're gonna shoot the scene. You see that black-haired dame over there?"

Joe stared at a tall woman who was wearing only a single brief, brightly colored garment. "They don't wear much out here," Joe said.



"That's her costume," Willie said. "That's Rita Hilare, the movie star. She runs around with Feinstein, and Feinstein owns half the damn' picture business. Ain't you ever seen her in the movies?"

"Burger and the old lady never went to the pictures," Joe said. Willie looked at him.

"The guy with her is Louis Moore, the director," Willie said, "the guy in the check coat."

Joe stood watching. Rita was laughing gaily. When the camera was ready she climbed up on the papier-mâché rock and made a pose. A man yelled "Quiet!" Two men brought in a gorilla and pushed it toward the rock. Rita saw it coming and called out, "Tee-gah! Oh, Tee-gah!" She clapped her hands.

"What's goin' on?" Joe said.

"Shut up!" Willie whispered. "The monk is her pal. They live on this island. He gives her the coconut."

The gorilla was handing her the coconut, while the trainer went through motions off scene. Rita reached for it but the gorilla suddenly clutched her wrist. "Cut!" Moore yelled. The trainer and his helper rushed for the gorilla while Rita screamed. The gorilla was excited now. He half turned and with a wide, sweeping blow knocked both men off their feet. "He's nuts!" Willie yelled. "Grab him! Conk him!"

"Me?" Joe said.

THE crowd of men rushed the gorilla but he swept them back without touching them. Rita squirmed to get loose and continued to scream. Joe walked over and stepped up on the rock. He grabbed the gorilla by the neck and whirled him around. Rita broke loose and the gorilla swept his arms around Joe. Joe staggered for a moment and then with a lunge he shoved out, tripping the gorilla as he did so. The gorilla banged to the ground flat on his back and the two trainers collared him instantly with a makeshift rope noose. Moore stared at Joe aghast. "Good Lord," he said, "he threw a gorilla. Here is a guy who throws gorillas!"

"Willie said to do it," Joe said.

They crowded around him, slapping his back, laughing about it now it was over. The gorilla was eating a banana under a bench. Rita broke through and flung her hands on Joe's shoulders. "You saved me—my life!" she cried.

"Willie said to get him," Joe repeated.

Rita flashed a look around. "Who is this man?" she asked. "Quick, who is this hero?"

"Joe Cruet," Willie said.

"Joe!" Rita gasped, looking back at his face. "Come with me, please." She led him into her dressing room and Moore followed.

"I'm not going to do another scene today," she said. "I simply can't. I'm unstrung. I'm shot. Maybe I ought to sue Feinstein."

"Sue the gorilla," Moore said.

"I'm going home," Rita said, rising. She looked at Joe. "You come with me," she said sweetly, "and we'll have a chat."

"Where we goin' to?" Joe said.

"You're gonna get your hair cut," Moore said, "in Delilah's cottage."

RITE'S house stood isolated on the highest of the Beverly Hills. It was Spanish Monastery type, she explained to Joe. She was not like other women. One cannot rise to the glorious altitudes of movie stardom and be just like any other woman. It was not true, what they wrote in the fan magazines. Art exacted its toll of suffering and loneliness. There were the agonies of option time, the horror of the autograph mobs, the smile that cloaks a breaking heart.

She linked her arm in his as they went downstairs and turned into the billiard room. Joe's face lighted up. "You got a pool table," he said.

Rita laughed joyously. "Oh, you're so utterly naïve!" she said. "Would you like to play?"

Joe took off his coat. "Shoot fifty-ball for a buck," he said.

"Oh, make it a hundred!" Rita laughed.

Joe powdered a cue carefully. "Play for a buck," he said. "You break."

Rita broke them and Joe ran out.

"You're wonderful, completely wonderful!" Rita said. "I owe you a dollar. Come on, we haven't seen half of my little house yet."

Joe pulled on his coat and followed her across the hall and into a huge bedroom walled by glass panels. She paused by the window that looked down on Hollywood. She took a deep, ecstatic breath. "Isn't it like the sky

Rita squirmed to get loose and continued to scream. Joe walked over and grabbed the gorilla and whirled him around. Rita broke loose and the gorilla swept his arms around Joe

turned upside down?" she murmured. "It looks so happy tonight. Doesn't it give you something, Joe—inside you?" "You owe me a buck," Joe said.

Rita laughed gaily. "What do you feel?" she asked.

"I feel pretty good," Joe said.

"You do, you feel it, too," she murmured. "Oh, Joe, you do understand!"

In the patio Rita lay back in the mass of pillows on the lounge and stared upward at the sky. She picked a rose from the trellis bush and tossed it to Joe. A Filipino boy poured the Scotch and sodas. Joe tossed down his sixth. The Filipino refilled his glass impassively.

"You may go, Lopez," Rita said, and the Filipino bowed slightly and disappeared. Rita took a long drink. "You know, Joe," she said, "I like you for two reasons I don't mind mentioning. First, there've been a lot of guys—men, I should say, in my life and most of them have tried to ruin it. You're the first man who ever tried to save it. They never understood that I had a mission, a great destiny to fulfill. Which one of them ever dreamed that I'd some day get ten thousand fan letters a month? But you understand, because you have a mission too. You don't say anything, but I know. I'm an artist and I have the sixth sense of the artist. Do you know Yoga, Joe?"

"Guess I don't know him," he said.

"Yoga," Rita said dreamily. "You don't know it but you are Yoga. You have a wonderful soul, a quiet soul, but it is seething inside. That's why I like you. Joe, that lugging around props is not for you. I'm going to fix that tomorrow. Joe . . . can you write?"

"Sure," Joe said, "I been to school." He poured one straight. She reached over and took it from him. He poured one for himself and they drank.

"Do you know anything about stories, I mean?" she said.

"I read some stories a coupla times."

Rita snapped her long fingers. "So what?" she said. "So what the hell is a writer anyway? I met a lot of writers and they're a bunch of bums. They're bums, Joe. Take it from me. I'm gonna see Feinstein in the morning and fix you up. If those bums can write, why can't you write? You got something. You got a soul. . . . Gee, Joe . . ." She began to cry but pretty soon she passed out.

Joe took his drink into the billiard room and began practicing bank shots

RITA faced Feinstein with a hangover. He sat behind a huge mahogany desk, his face deadpan behind a big cigar. "How can he be a writer," Feinstein said, "when he never wrote anything?" "You're going to give him the break," Rita said coldly.

Feinstein got to his feet and came around to her. "Okay, Rita," he said. "I'll put this fellow to work. One hundred a week he gets, don't you worry."

"A hundred a week!" she scoffed. "Can you spare it?"

"Two hundred," Feinstein said hurriedly. "Two hundred he gets. Who is he, Maxwell Hemingway?"

She stroked his cheek. "That's better," she said. "Three hundred will be okay to start." She kissed the end of his nose. He flushed happily. "His name," she said, "is Joe Crulet."

Feinstein flipped a key and yelled at his secretary, "Take a fellow named Joe Crulet from the prop department and put him down for a writer with an office!"

Rita smiled and stroked his head as he relighted his cigar.

For three days Joe Crulet went to his office, sat at his desk and spent the day playing pick-up-sticks. On the fourth day while Joe was eating his lunch from a tin pail there came a knock at the door. "Okay," Joe said.

A girl came in. Joe looked at her thoughtfully. She was smiling nervously. "I'm Minnie Regan," she said. "I'm your secretary."

Joe stared at her, fascinated. "Secretary?" he said.

"Yes, I've been assigned to you. I hope I do all right."

"You're all right," Joe said. "You sit down."

Minnie smiled and sat down.

Joe handed her half of a sandwich.

"Thank you," she said.

JOE stared at her fondly. "You're a pretty big one," he said. "How much do you weigh?"

Minnie giggled. "I hate to diet," she said. "Anyway, who cares? I guess I'm about one hundred and fifty. Is there anything you want done?"

Joe stared at her and shook his head. "No dictation? Maybe a letter?"

"Sure—make a letter." He turned to the sticks. She took out her notebook

meets a rich fella, kind of a Joan Crawford and Robert Taylor. You probably don't like Robert Taylor. A lot of men don't much."

"I don't know about him," Joe said.

"I guess it ain't much good," Minnie went on, "but I thought it was kinda swell in parts. He loves her but his father is kind of highfalutin and he has a snooty mother and they don't care much for Joan, but Bob does, and finally she makes them like her because of what she does for him, how she changes him into a real fellow. I don't know . . . I . . ."

"That's a good story," Joe said. "We make that one."

The telephone rang. Minnie reached for it. She handed it to Joe. "It's Miss Hilare," she said. She picked up her pad and walked to the door. Joe sat holding the receiver, watching her go. She glanced back and smiled from the door before she went out. A thrill went up Joe's spine. He slowly put the receiver

"I ain't ever gone with one before," said Joe.

In the Clover Club they met Feinstein. "How's the story?" Feinstein said. "Fine!" Minnie said. "Swell!"

"You're crazy," Feinstein said. "What's it about?"

"It ain't done yet," Joe said. "How we gonna tell you that?"

"Forget it," said Feinstein.

For five days Rita tried to get in touch with Joe Crulet. His office door was always locked. Nobody on the lot ever saw him. He never answered the telephone. Finally Rita lost patience. She marched in to Feinstein's office. He was finishing reading a manuscript. He looked as though he had just heard some good news. His eyes glowed.

"Hello, Rita, dear!" he greeted her.

"Sol," she said, "you know that Joe Crulet?"

"Do I know him!" Sol exclaimed.

"Well, fire him!" Rita shouted. "Kick him off this lot!"

"I can't do that," Feinstein said. "Take it easy. How can I do that?"

"What do you mean, how can you do that? You're Solomon Feinstein, aren't you? You're the picture business!" Rita kicked an ash tray across the room.

"Look," said Feinstein, "I can't fire him. I just mailed him a contract. He ain't a writer any more, he's a producer!"

RITA gaped at him. "A producer!" she exclaimed. "Are you nuts? He don't know where he lives."

"So what if he don't!" Feinstein belted. "Does he have to know where he lives to be a producer?" He waved the manuscript. "You see this?" he said. "This is his story! It's terrific! It's your greatest picture!"

"I'll kill you for this, Sol," she said coldly.

"I make you the biggest star in the business and you kill me for it! Ain't that gratitude, or is it something?" Feinstein cried. "I'm telling you!" He shook the script furiously at her. "I got it in the mail from him yesterday from Reno. It's bigger than the Birth of a Nation. He done it for you, Rita! I'll put two million in this picture. I'll put you on twenty-four sheets from here to the north Poland. It's—" He sank into his chair with a beatific smile—"It's a stupendity. That's merely all it is."

"You said two million dollars?" Rita said slowly.

"Maybe three million. I'm stunned."

"Two million . . ." She picked up the ash tray. "I told you he had something, that guy," she said.

"You sure did," Feinstein agreed. "You did yourself a good turn when you did it too."

"Damn' if I can believe it," she murmured.

She sat down. "What's he doing in Reno?" she asked.

"He got married there," Feinstein said. "He married his secretary, Minnie Regan."

She leaped to her feet. "Why, the rat!" she said. "Why, the two-timing, four-faced rat! How do you like that? Why, I'll kill him in cold blood."

"Wait till he makes the picture," said Feinstein.

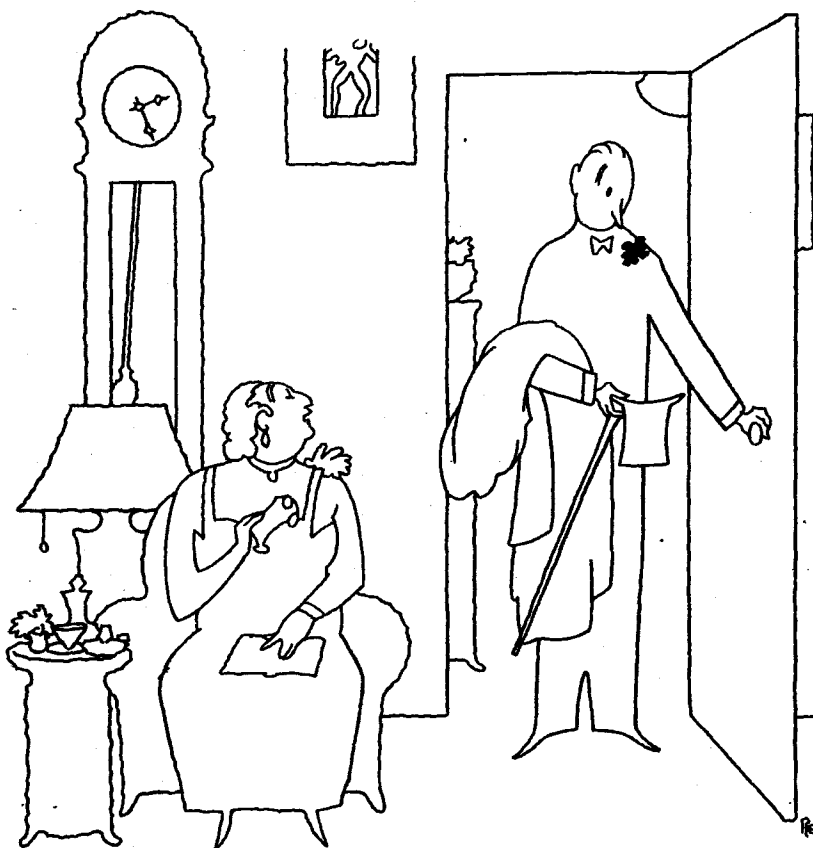
"How do you like that?" she repeated. "I take him from nothing but a guy who throws around gorillas—"

The secretary walked in. She handed Feinstein a telegram. "It's from him," said Feinstein.

"Well, read it," Rita exclaimed.

Feinstein read.

"Dear Feinstein. We have signed up the contract. We are also married by when you get this. It feels pretty good. The old lady and Burger are with us by an airplane trip. Burger will make book with you when we get back there pretty soon. Joe Crulet."



"I can't understand what's got into the younger generation. If your dear father were alive, he wouldn't have been home yet!"

GARDNER REA

and sat with poised pencil, waiting. After a moment she said, "Who do you want to write it to?"

Joe looked up. "Oh," he said, "you want me to make a letter? Sure."

She looked at him curiously.

"Spruce Street in Columbus, Ohio," he said. "Dear Ma. I am working in the studio making a story. I get three hundred dollars a week. This is a pretty good place. Pretty soon you and Burger come over here. Burger can make plenty of book. Love from Joe."

She folded the pad.

"You married to some fellow?" Joe said.

"Why, no—not yet," Minnie stammered. She had heard all writers were crazy. All the girls in the stenographic department knew it. "Have you started on your story?" she said.

"I ain't got any ideas," Joe said.

There was a long pause. She stood up. "Anything else, Mr. Crulet?" she asked.

"You sit down and visit," Joe said.

Minnie sat down and took out a cigarette.

"I had a kind of an idea," she said timidly. "It's about a poor girl who

back on the hook and settled down in the swivel chair for a long daydream that was unbroken by the insistent ringing of the telephone.

THAT night he took Minnie out to dinner, and she showed him the town. They went to the Bali and the Hula Hut and the Trocadero. "You're in pictures now," Minnie said, "and you got to get around so your name keeps in the papers." Joe said, "I ain't only havin' a few drinks." Minnie said, "Joe, you're just a country boy and you don't know how this town operates. Tomorrow I'll talk to Phil McNeil and he'll call all the papers and tell them you was in all these places with the rest of the big shots and they'll print it for Phil because you're news and all you have to do is pay Phil twenty-five dollars a month."

"Who's Phil?" Joe asked in the Hawaiian Paradise. He was drinking beer out of a coconut.

"He's my girl friend's husband," Minnie said. "Don't you ever get drunk?"

"I guess not," Joe said. "You sure are pretty, Minnie."

"You ever gone with a girl steady?"

Murder for Christmas

By Agatha Christie

ILLUSTRATED BY MARIO COOPER

The Story Thus Far:

RICH old Simeon Lee—retired and living at beautiful Gorston Hall, England—notifies the authorities that some diamonds—rough stones that he has kept in a safe in his bedroom—have been stolen. Then, shortly before the arrival of Superintendent of Police Sugden, someone enters his room (although he has locked himself in!) and cuts his throat.

Sugden examines the body and the room. He detects old Simeon's granddaughter, Pilar Estravados, in the act of secreting two small objects. He orders the girl to hand them over to him. She obeys, and Sugden slips the items into his pocket. One is a scrap of rubber (which, it appears, has been cut from a sponge bag in the victim's room); the other is a short wooden peg.

Colonel Johnson, chief constable of the county, arrives on the scene. He is accompanied by Hercule Poirot, Europe's most brilliant detective, who is visiting Johnson. The three men question the various members of the household. It soon becomes obvious that the killing was an "inside job." And the motive, it appears, may have been the desire of someone to keep Mr. Lee from changing his will.

It is Christmas Eve. Assembled in the house—in addition to Mr. Lee's son, Alfred, and Alfred's wife, Lydia (who have lived at Gorston Hall for years), and Pilar Estravados—are old Simeon's two other married sons and their wives: David, an artist, and Hilda; George, a member of Parliament, and Magdalene. Also, the black sheep of the family, Harry Lee, who has been wandering about the world for twenty years, and Stephen Farr, the son of one of Mr. Lee's old partners. Among the servants are: Tressilian, the butler, and one Horbury, the old man's valet.

Everyone professes to be horrified by the tragedy. One by one, Poirot talks to each member of the family. Lydia Lee he interviews in one of the small gardens—a spot in which stones and pebbles have been skillfully utilized in the production of some attractive scenes. Lydia goes into the house. Poirot, left alone, scoops up some of the pebbles from one scene. They are rough diamonds—part of the missing lot!

A few minutes later, Johnson, Sugden and Poirot hold a conference. Johnson says: "Inquest tomorrow. There'll be an adjournment, of course." "Yes, sir," Sugden says quietly. "I've seen the coroner and it's all arranged for."

VIII

GEORGE LEE came into the room accompanied by his wife.

Colonel Johnson said, "Good morning. Sit down, will you? There are a few questions I want to ask you both. Something I'm not quite clear about."

"I shall be glad to give you any assistance I can," said George somewhat pompously.

Magdalene said faintly, "Of course!"

The chief constable gave a slight nod to Sugden. The latter said, "About those telephone calls on the night of the crime. You put through a call to Westeringham, I think you said, Mr. Lee?"

George said coldly, "Yes, I did. To my agent in the constituency. I can refer you to him and—"

Superintendent Sugden held up his hand to stem the flow.

"Quite so—quite so, Mr. Lee. We're not disputing that point. Your call went through at 8:59 exactly."

(Continued on page 46)



Poirot said gravely, "I am studying something very important—the face of Simeon Lee when he was a young man"



At Dawning

By Marjorie Fischer

ILLUSTRATED BY HARRY BECKHOFF

A young man with ideas
about art meets a girl with
ideas about life and men

THE silver plane soared through time, over the violent landscape of Central America. Joe looked out past the wing of the plane, seeing mountains covered with green wool that was trees, flat green pastures, and far away the green and purple ocean. The plane seemed scarcely to move, hung roaring and motionless over the upflung land. But our cruising speed is one hundred and eighty miles an hour, thought Joe, seeing the belt still fastened over his thighs—because I am not air-minded. The young woman in the seat opposite was finishing her hearty lunch with an orange, and the air in the cabin smelled like a picnic. There is a nonchalance about eating heartily ten thousand feet above the earth that calls for a lack of imagination I do not possess, thought Joe, looking at the young woman not for the first time.

The steward came down the aisle from the cockpit holding a telegram; he stopped at Joe's side.

"Mr. Joseph Sheean?" he asked.

"That's right," said Joe. He read the scrawled message and looked up with a smile. "No answer."

"Thank you, sir. May I ask, are you Joseph Sheean, the director? The one who did *At Dawning*?"

"None other," said Joe, not displeased that the steward must have read his telegram. I'm Joe Sheean escaping from Hollywood forever, after eight years in Hollywood, which is also forever. Now he could take up his life where it had ended eight years ago, with that production of *The Cherry Orchard*, which had been a financial failure but a miracle of direction and which had landed him in Hollywood.

"Pardon me," shouted the young woman opposite, above the roar of the engine. "You dropped this."

"Thank you." Joe took the telegram from her and wondered if she had read the message from the studio, offering him a fabulous sum if he would only come back to direct three more pictures. He was about to tear the telegram to bits, but just in case—he folded it neatly and put it into his pocket.

A sign flashed on: Please fasten your seat belt. Joe had not unfastened his, but he leaned over and helped the young woman, noting that she smelled sweetly,

was dressed with elegance, and might well be part of the adventure that he was starting on before he returned to New York and the theater. Because this time he meant it; he was leaving Hollywood for good. He glanced at himself in the mirror beside his chair, biting his lips nervously. Joe Sheean, thirty-eight, no longer lean but not yet fat, stared at his image with melancholy eyes. Before it was too late, he was returning to the theater. This was a vacation to prepare himself for the realities ahead and so he had told his friends in Hollywood.

Beyond the window he saw the world as an angel might see it. It was early morning, the luminous sky was gold, rose and blue. The earth below sharpened; he saw banana trees like green stars, neat farms like children's toys. Little Joey Sheean, who had never had any toys because the Sheeans were so poor, looked out at the earth below him strewn with toys.

The young woman shouted:
"There's Izalco. Still active."

Joe turned, and saw smoke smudging across the sky from the volcano, Izalco.

"Let's hope it doesn't put on a show for us while we're here," said Joe. "Ever been here before?"

"Twice."

"Sounds as if you like it. Are you staying long?"

THE plane skimmed just over the treetops at the edge of the landing field, and slid through the air to earth. By the time Joe had unfastened his belt, collected his overcoat, hat and magazines, the young woman was in the customhouse. She stood beside her open bags, and Joe read her name on the labels—Miss Louise Cadman, New York. She caught him reading and smiled.

"A natural and not unflattering curiosity," said Joe. "My name's—"

"I heard," said Miss Cadman. "Joseph Sheean, who directed *At Dawning*. Not the best movie I ever saw, but how do you do, anyway."

"A hell of a picture," said Joe. "It grossed over a million. How do you do?"

They shook hands and laughed together. Joe



looked around for anyone who might be meeting Miss Cadman, and she caught him again and went on laughing.

"I'm here for an export company in New York," she said.

They got into the same car, and the driver turned around for instructions.

"The best hotel," Joe said.

"There are two best hotels," said Miss Cadman. "Both are pretty bad. I stay at the Valencia."

"Well, then, if you don't mind—" said Joe. He said to the driver: "I'll take my chances at the Valencia."

The car drove into the small, flat city built of pink and blue and cream-colored plaster houses. It drove past a fort where uniformed men with guns leaned from the turrets at the four corners. Joe listened to Louise Cadman saying revolution, dictatorship, poverty, and watched the beautiful dark women walk along the streets; their clothes were rags, their feet





"Buenas noches, señor," said the peasant in the creaking cart. Louise explained to the peasant that they were stuck, and Joe handed over many pesos

he touched the draggled mosquito netting before he fell asleep; Louise Cadman, real, earning her living, was somewhere near by, and she had blue eyes and would photograph badly.

He looked up the Americans at the consulate and at the bank, and all of them were pleased to entertain Joseph Sheean, who had directed *At Dawning* and other pictures they remembered. The North Americans and the Central Americans were properly desperate about living in the tropics, and they drank a good deal in a philosophical way. They showed Joe about, and took him to the country club and the coffee plantations. But all this was only when Louise Cadman was busy earning her living. Every moment that she was free, Joe spent with her. She was charming in a way that had nothing to do with the movies; she was sweet and sensible and feminine, and bitter, too, which delighted Joe. He began to think fate had put him on the plane that carried Louise, at the very moment when he had decided to give up Hollywood; he was pretty solemn about it. Every day he meant to tell her about his return to the theater, and somehow every day he put it off.

He had hired a car, and many evenings they drove out into the country for dinner. On the night when he had determined to tell her—why not?—they drove along talking very little. When they stopped at the inn, Joe stepped out, looked up at the sky, and forgot to help Louise from the car. The arched tropical sky was strewn with stars, a garden all in bloom, and the Milky Way flowed in a luminous stream across the heavens. The air was cool and sweet and smelled of flowers. Joe bent and kissed Louise lightly.

"Don't be angry," he said. "It's simply to celebrate the fact that Joseph Sheean is happy for the first time in God knows when."

"I see," said Louise. She touched his hand. "I'm happy, too."

They ate in the garden, with thin radio music spattering over them. Louise bowed to a woman at one of the tables, where two couples were sitting.

"She'll forgive my going out alone with you," she said. "For I'm an American." (Continued on page 39)

were bare, they carried baskets on their heads and stepped proudly.

Heat broke through the morning and swept over the city. Green palm trees and red flowers in the plaza outside the cathedral were motionless in the white sunlight. Dust was drawn upward through the heat. The city might be a set for a picture, thought Joe, but it's real; the cathedral has four walls. He turned to Louise, thinking how different she looked from the girls in Hollywood. She was pretty, but she would photograph badly, and Joe liked her especially for that.

"Could we have dinner tonight?" he said. "You wouldn't be busy with exports tonight, would you?"

"No, indeed I wouldn't," she said. She laughed. "All the passengers on the plane were listening to us shout at each other. I was afraid you'd ask me before we got off. I'd love to dine with you."

"Fine," said Joe, and he followed her at a distance into the lobby of the Valencia. He stood away a little

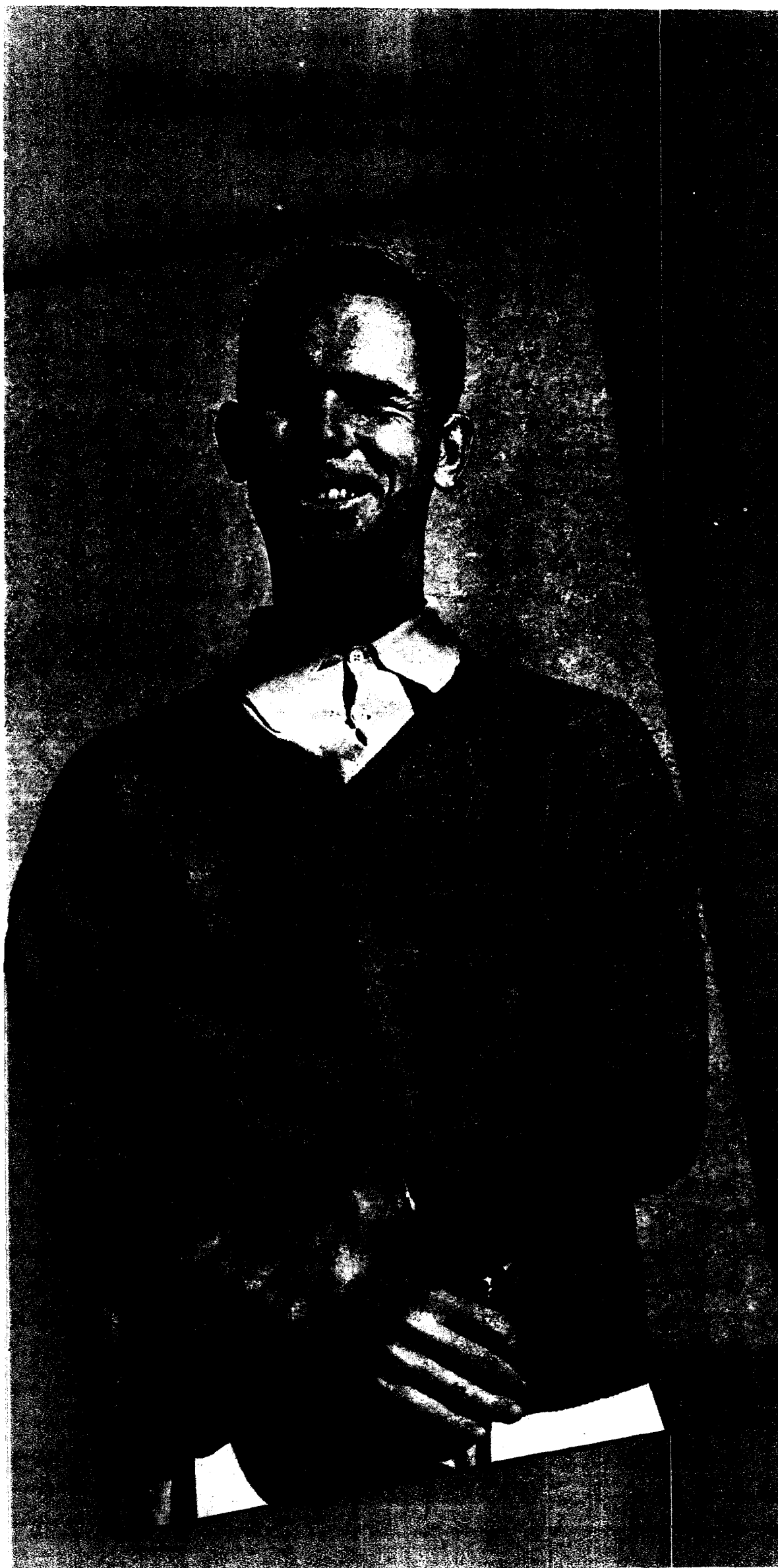
while she registered, noting a patio at one end of the hall, where a fountain ran over into a marble basin, and purple bougainvillea grew over the walls.

"No, without bath," he heard Miss Cadman say.

When she had gone, Joe went to register.

"What's the best you've got?" he asked the clerk. He followed the bellboy to his suite. Exporting couldn't pay very well if you couldn't afford a room and bath at the Valencia. The floors in Joe's two rooms were tiled, the plaster walls were cracked and stained, the wicker chairs were unraveling. Over the bed hung a hoop with mosquito netting tied in a knot. Sunlight came through the shutters like bright knives, and the sounds of a boy shouting papers, an oxcart creaking, a motor horn tooting, swirled about Joe. He smiled suddenly, and lay down at once on the bed, spreading the mosquito netting about him. He felt like a beachcomber; he felt like anyone but Joseph Sheean, slave to Hollywood. Here in this little Central American city he was close to reality at last, and





There are a lot of reasons why a great tennis player may not be a great golfer. But Mr. Ellsworth Vines hadn't heard them. He's on his way to high honors in golf

UNTIL a month and a half ago, I never realized what was the matter with my golf game. I knew something was wrong, as I kept on losing small clusters of two-dollar bills to unworthy and scheming persons. Then it suddenly dawned on me there was nothing fundamentally wrong with my game. It was the same old sterling collapse it had always been. The trouble was with my partners.

In order to play sound, satisfying golf, you must have a stanch, trustworthy partner, and up to this time, my luck in finding partners had been simply atrocious.

If I took a sudden fancy to Oscar Owl, what happened? On Friday, Mr. Oscar Owl, playing with three strangers, would step forth on the course and shoot a shining 77, making you think of Sam Snead, with a slight touch of the old Bob Jones. Craftily surveying this excellence, I would choose Oscar as my partner on Saturday, the very next day, and would trustfully wager part of the October payment on the car, betting on myself and Oscar to defeat two other gentlemen, and Oscar would then stagger around the course in 95, throwing me down in all directions and losing all the dough.

In the course of time, I became morose about the partner problem, but of a sudden I had this recent luck. I stumbled upon a new golfing comrade, a recent arrival in our club, and now I am knee-deep in clover again. I rarely lose a wager. I freely accept any and all challengers, if they desire to take on me and my new partner, who is a serious-looking youth, weighing 175 pounds and very limber in the arms and legs. He looks a little like Abe Lincoln at twenty-two, but that does not affect his golf.

A Team That Can't Lose

He is a young unknown in golfing circles, shows great promise, and his name is Vines. When he joined our club, which is the San Gabriel outfit, they had him down in the application book as Hines, but that was caught by the secretary. He is strictly a new factor in golf, but is a remarkably steady partner, and as a team we have never stumbled to defeat. We invariably win. Once in a great while, we are almost tied by local sharpshooters, but never upset.

This Vines boy lives over in Pasadena, with his young wife and baby, about twenty minutes from the San Gabriel Club, and while he is perfectly raw material, while he is a neophyte, a newcomer and a stranger on golf courses, still he plays other games fairly well. He is first-rate at bridge, if not badgered while bidding. He bowls with great confidence and aplomb. He is pretty fair at three-cushion billiards and darts and he also plays a little tennis.

In fact, our Mr. Andy Whitehead, the best-dressed undertaker in San Gabriel, asserts fearlessly that Vines right now is the best tennis player alive or dead, foreign or domestic, and will certainly pin back the invitingly pinnable ears of Mr. Donald Budge, the two-legged hurricane. On the other hand, Mr. Freddy Clark contends that Don Budge will smother Vines when they meet, and I wouldn't know about that. The two of them will soon be seen blasting tennis balls at each other, along with Fred Perry, so the tennis fans can step up and see for themselves.

San Gabriel members were mildly interested when Vines joined the club, wondering what sort of golfer he might be. Did he have, they asked one another, the spark that goes along with star material, or was he just another fairly good player out for the sunshine, fun and caddy fees?

I am now in a position to forward inside information and let it be known that here we have a coming American amateur golf champion, who will eventually steam-roller the field and produce the headline, Vines Wins Amateur. (Continued on page 39)

Home as Usual

By Donald Hough

ILLUSTRATED BY GEORGE DE ZAYAS

She wouldn't say yes, and he wouldn't take no. A very romantic standoff



"Your home is too crowded," she says.
"They won't even miss me. The fire department has put out the fire"

AS MY story opens, I am sitting in the city room of the Chronicle looking at the clock above the copy desk. The clock says eight minutes to five. The clock is crazy. Half an hour ago it said ten minutes to five.

There's not much doing in the city room. Joe Herrold, who has finished a trick at the copy desk, pauses behind me. He says, "Coming down to the Dutchman's, Bing?"

I wave him away. "I got a date at five," I tell him. I speak coldly. Every time I have a date with Alicia, Joe wants to know who I can get for him. He starts to speak, but I head him off. I ask, "What time have you got? This clock up here is crazy."

He says, "Where is your watch?"

I glance down at my new suit. "I have a new suit," I explain.

Joe shakes his head. "Same with my watch," he says, "only all I got out of it was a headache." He turns away. I am suddenly sorry for Joe. I am suddenly sorry for everybody in the world. Everybody but me. I call him back. "Joe, old pal," I say, speaking from the heart, "I am engaged."

Joe stands there and looks at me. I elucidate: "Joe, I am engaged to be married. I am practically a married man."

This gives Joe an idea. He says, "Let's go down and have a quick one, to celebrate."

I say, "Joe, I do not feel like celebrating. It is too big a thing."

Joe says, "Let's have a quick one to drown our sorrow."

Joe has got a little mind.

"Joe," I say, "will you please say goodbye to the Dutchman for me? From now on, the Dutchman's is out of bounds, and so is the Press Tavern, and so is the Browning Study Club. I'm a family man, settled down."

HE IS disappointed; he looks glum. I am filled with compassion for Joe.

I say to him, "The wife and I will want you and the fellows out for a housewarming as soon as we're settled."

"Settled where?" Joe says.

"In the country," I tell him. "A white house, with flowers in the yard, and vegetables. You save on rent with vegetables, and—"

"Alicia does not like me," Joe says.

"She doesn't really know you," I explain. "The way I have it planned, Joe, our home will be the meeting place for all our friends. Will you come to the housewarming?"

"Sure," Joe says. He looks out the window. "Bing, I wish I could find a nice girl, somebody like Alicia, only with a better disposition and a straighter nose, and settle down and have a real home. This kind of life is fine in the movies, but when you have to go out and do it in the actual flesh it is a pain in the neck."

I nod understandingly. Joe says, "We ought to have a quick one on account of its being a pain in the neck."

I slap my friend Joe on the back. "Old man," I tell him, "the old days are so far behind me that I can hardly remember what they were like."

"I will take a quick one for you," Joe says. He goes out.

I look at the clock. It is two minutes to five. My heart leaps. I get my hat and walk down the hallway to the executive offices. I hope old Horseface Hawes, Alicia's boss, has gone home. I look through the glass windows into Horseface's office, and I am glad to see that Alicia is there alone. She is at her typewriter, sitting very straight in her chair, typing. She has her hair freshly waved and she has got her green dress on, the one she knows I like best. She has not seen me yet, and I stand there looking at her.

She is beautiful. Her nose tilts up a little, but to me this is perfect. A lump comes to my throat. My wife. My own darling wife. There she is, typing as fast as she can, so she won't keep me waiting.

Finally I cannot stand it any longer, and I go in. Alicia looks up. "Hello, dear," I say buoyantly. She lets her wonderful slim fingers slip from the typewriter keys. She smiles at me. She does not say anything, and I notice her hands are trembling. She takes hold of

the sides of her chair, and she says one word to me. It is:

"No."

"Alicia!" is all I can say. I feel weak, and I sit down on the edge of the desk. I cannot think. I hear myself saying, "I thought sure it would be yes."

Alicia says, "Bing, I'm sorry, but it's no."

I am filled with despair. I say, "All day, even when I was working hard on the Phillips divorce story, I kept saying to myself, 'It's going to be yes. It's a cinch to be yes. At five o'clock I'll be an engaged man.' Maybe," I say hopefully, "you haven't had enough time to think it over, Alicia. If you gave it a little more thought, I'm sure it would be yes."

Alicia smiles at me. She says, "Bing dear, I have had plenty of time since last night."

"Have you got any new reasons?" I ask her. My heart is sinking.

"No," Alicia says. "Just the old ones." I start to speak, but she stops me. She says, "You promised last night that my decision would be final. You said all I had to say would be one word."

"I thought it would be yes," I explain. I am in misery.

She says, "It's no." She looks at me. I am having a hard time to keep my eyes from smarting. She says, "Bing, I really do love you. I can't help but love you;

that's the whole trouble. But we just can't get married. It would never do, Bing; it would be a ghastly failure. All my life I've thought of getting married as settling down into a nice, lovely groove, washing the dishes and watering the plants and arranging my rooms." She hesitates, then goes on: "It isn't just that I want these things, Bing. I'm not being selfish. It's just that I know, in my heart, no matter how hard I tried, I couldn't be a good wife without them."

My heart begins to leap. Alicia is talking right up my alley. "Darling," I say eagerly, "it's the same way with me. The way I always see it in my dreams, we'd have a nice little place up in Westchester or over in Jersey, where I could bring home rakes and flowerpots and seeds. I can close my eyes and see a

right," I say, my voice heavy with discouragement, "I'd come home pie-eyed and bust you one in the nose."

Alicia looks thoughtful. "No," she says, "I don't really think you'd do that. But I don't think you'd ever get home. You'd—forget. For years you've been dashing around town any time of the day or night, into and out of bars with your cronies—policemen and prize fighters and race-track bookies and other reporters for pals—with never a thought, Bing, for the—nicer things of life. No home; just running to your room for a clean shirt or a quick nap, living a life—Bing, can't you see what I mean? It's been a wonderful year, fine in some ways, as a kind of lark. But for us getting married—can't you see you're a born bachelor? It just isn't in me, Bing, to be married to a—bachelor."

I look at Alicia with dignity. "Alicia," I tell her, "do you realize that before they are married everybody is more or less a bachelor? I certainly wouldn't advise you to go out and get married to a married man."

ALICIA has nothing to say. She is looking at her fingers. I sense victory, and a thrill runs through me. "Come," I say, reaching over and taking one of her beautiful hands, "let's go over to Dinty's and have a plate of pickled pig's feet and a scoop of beer."

Alicia does not look up. She withdraws her hand. She says, "I can't."

I am amazed. "What do you mean, you can't?" I ask her politely. She says, "I have an engagement. I'm going out to Pelham Manor for tea. Tea and cakes, Bing, then sit before a blazing fire and—relax. Just a quiet home evening, the kind I love."

"Some girl friend?" I say hopefully, but the hope is all in my voice. Inside, I am turning to ashes.

Alicia says, "No, I'm going out with Jack Haley. He wants me to meet his mother. Just a quiet evening by the fireside—"

She stops. She is looking past me. I turn. There stands Jack Haley, of the advertising department. Jack Haley. I should have guessed it. He has vulture blood in his veins. Above every happy couple, the black shadow of Jack Haley soars in ever-narrowing circles. He can sense an opportunity to break up a home, or nearly a home, with an accuracy unknown in honest men. He is dressed, as always, with stirring beauty. He has a white flower in his lapel. There is a box of flowers under his arm. His charming pink face is freshly shaved, all but the little mustache. He is smiling at Alicia. At Alicia.

I am going blind. I turn away; I turn away from Jack Haley and from Alicia, and grope my way out into the hallway and into an elevator and downstairs and out into God's clean, fresh air. It is raining, a cold November rain. I start to walk rapidly toward my little home. But as I pass the door of the Dutchman's it occurs to me that it is silly to get soaking wet just because I am disappointed in love, and I turn in.

Joe Herrold and Gary Appel, a police reporter, are standing at the bar. I walk past them, looking straight ahead, and say to Otto, "Otto, give me a double Scotch. On the cuff," I remind him.

IFEEL Joe moving along the bar toward me. I do not look at him. He comes up close and says, "What happened to the date?" I tell him, sadly, "Please go away and leave me alone."

Gary has come over by this time. Joe says to Gary, "He had a date, he was engaged to be married, and now he's—at liberty." Joe sighs. "And we were invited to the housewarming." I gag on my drink. Joe takes my arm and leans close and says, "Come on, Bing, tell us." "Jack Haley," I say.

My friends groan in concert. Joe says, in disgust, "That stuffed shirt. That walking gents' clothing store." Gary says, "Pelham Manor, tea with his mother, fire in the fireplace, I'll bet ten dollars. That's his number one maneuver. That baby's a pickpocket if there ever was one."

"Double one," I tell Otto desperately, "on the cuff."

"No," Gary says. He waves Otto away. "This is no time to befuddle the senses, Bing. Let's go over into a corner, away from temptation, and figure things out."

We go over and sit down at a table. Gary says, "Bing, where does Alicia live? Some girls' club, isn't it?"

I feel of my forehead. It is soaking wet. I am going through hell. I can only

asks. Well, I will just make an average guess. I say, "We went to Dinty's and had some pig's feet and beer, then went to a movie."

"Does she like pig's feet?" Gary asks. Gary is a fine reporter.

"Nothing goes better with a glass of beer," I tell him.

"Does she like beer?" This is Gary, still at me.

HOWEVER, I have decided not to answer. I just sit there. Maybe if I just sit there, Gary will shut up. But he does not. He leans forward on the table and asks, "Bing, what movie did you go to see?"

I take a deep breath. I say, "We saw W. C. Fields in—"

"Does she like Fields?" Gary asks.



"I hope," I say in a dignified manner, "I can open a few heathen oysters. I am not entirely dumb"

typical evening in our lives." I close my eyes. "It would start with you in the kitchen, getting supper. Maybe stopping once in a while to water the plants. Happy, content, humming a tune. Then at six you'd hear a brisk step on the sidewalk. Me, home from a hard day in the city, perhaps with a bundle under my arm—"

"Gin," Alicia interrupts.

I open my eyes and look at her. I am hurt. "Something for the kids," I say softly. I go on: "I'd take off my shoes and put on my slippers and make a fire in the fireplace and adjust the reading lamp and put my feet up on a chair and take a deep breath—"

"And drink up the gin," Alicia puts in. I am sick at heart; it is no use. "All



nod at Gary. He goes on: "That's it. Lives in a club, domestic type, been going with you for about a year. So Haley takes her to Pelham Manor for tea. With his mother. In other words, Haley is a master craftsman. A scientist. Now, Bing, where did you take her the last date you had?"

I say, "To the Young Coburn-Kid Barnes fight. Ringside seats."

"Does she like fights?" Gary asks.

I have got half a mind to tell Gary to mind his own business. I say, "Of course she does. The only thing about them she doesn't like is that they make her sick to her stomach. At the Coburn-Barnes fight she fainted in the sixth round and I had to take her out and leave her in a drugstore."

"And the time before that?" Gary persists. I can hardly think. My head is whirling. I wish they would leave me alone. A picture of my jumping off the Manhattan bridge flashes through my mind. "The time before that?" Gary

I say firmly, "Everybody knows that Fields is the greatest comedian on the screen. Alicia is getting to like him better than at first."

"You better go ahead and marry him," Gary says. "It's your only chance. I begin to see Alicia's side of it. After a year with you, a student like Haley must be like a cool breeze in Death Valley."

IAM thrown into a state of despair. I am all ashes inside, bitter ashes. I place my hands on the table. "What can I do?" I ask him. "Haley's got a mother; he's got some tea and a fire in the grate. He's got Pelham Manor. The only places I have got are movie theaters, prize-fight stadiums, hamburger stands, bars, comfort stations, and other places where you can get out of the wind."

"You've got a home," Joe says suddenly.

I can only laugh tragically. "That

cellar's no home," I point out to him. "It's got a fireplace in it," Joe pursues. He is getting enthusiastic. "It's back of your dresser, where you throw your soiled shirts. I've seen it."

I can't help but glance at Joe's shirt. "But it's never had a fire in it," I tell him. Joe's shirt looks familiar.

"You could make one," Joe says. He taps a finger on the table. "You could get some firewood and clean the place up and make tea and invite the little lady over and show her what home life is really like."

"But I would have to have a mother or something," I object. "Alicia comes from Philadelphia." My friends are silent. They are thinking. They have no mothers handy, either. Suddenly Joe snaps his fingers. He says, "Al Arnold's

It is five o'clock. I am sitting confidently, almost jauntily, on the edge of Alicia's desk. I have a date with her. Our last. Anyway, Alicia thinks it's our last. She says, "Bing, you promise, then, that this is to be—final?"

"I'm shooting the works tonight," I tell her grimly. "Tomorrow all you'll have to say will be just one— By the way, I suppose you wonder what I have in mind for this evening."

ALICIA looks at me with a resigned expression. "Oh," she says, "I know all about it. We'll have pickled pig's feet at Dinty's, then go to a prize fight or to see W. C.—"

"No." I cannot help but laugh. I am elated; I can hardly hold myself in. "Dear," I tell her, taking a slight liberty

She gets her hat; she is walking around like she is in a dream. We go out into the hallway. There we happen to meet Gary and Joe and a couple of the other fellows. Gary said, "Bing, come on down to the Dutchman's." I say loudly, "Gary, I have seen the Dutchman's for the last time. I am on the water wagon for life, and I would advise you to do the same." Joe then says, "Well, Bing, we'll see you at the fights Thursday night." I laugh and shake my head. I say in a ringing voice, "Joe, I am not interested in prize fights. That is a part of the old days."

Naturally, this is all a part of the plan. We have rehearsed it last night. Alicia, of course, does not know it. She looks up at me and says, as we pass on, "Bing, you do have loyal friends." I

miles out in the country. A clean curtain is hanging in front of the kitchen. The couch is drawn up before the fireplace, and it has a blue-and-white cover on it, a fine Colonial design—something Joe picked up in the maternity ward. The books are on the table, one of them turned face down, open, as though it had been left that way last night. My new pipe and the can of tobacco are beside it. On the floor are the red slippers that Joe got from the convalescent wing. The two stand lamps, also Colonial design, that Joe has borrowed from the janitor of his building, are shedding a soft light over it all.

Alicia says, "Why, Bing, I never dreamed— Why, this is splendid. You have wonderful taste."

I feel a lump in my throat. I look



aunt. Al keeps talking about his aunt, over in Brooklyn. We could borrow her for tomorrow night."

I am getting restless. I explain, "Fellows, this is a private love affair. It is not a municipal celebration. The next thing, you will want to call in Grover Whalen."

"It is not a private love affair," Joe says positively. "Not with Haley in it. It is a challenge to the whole editorial department. We can't let those collar ads from downstairs get the idea they can raid our women. What we're going to do, we're going over to your place tonight, Bing, and we're going to fix it up. Gary can get some flowers and plants over at the morgue. It's my day off tomorrow and I'll get some books and pictures from the hospital. I'll borrow some stuff from one of the empty apartments in the building where I live. I know the janitor. What we got to do tonight, we got to go over there and scrub the place up and—rehearse."

At this point the door is pushed open. Alicia stands there. She takes one look around, and her eyes are feverish and she looks determined

by using the term in advance, "tonight I'm going to show you the way it would be if we were really married. We're going over to my little home. Al Arnold's aunt will be there as hostess, and we'll sit by the fire, Alicia, and sip tea, and look into the flames and—dream."

Alicia looks puzzled. "You mean you have a home?" she says. "You have moved out of that—cave you've told me about?"

"I'm referring to my little place on East Thirty-seventh Street," I tell her with dignity. "It may be a basement apartment, but to me it's the most wonderful thing in the world—home. And besides tea, Alicia, we are going to have something else. A surprise, dear." I stand up. "Hurry, put on your hat. Let's get started."

nod, smiling to myself. She does not know the half of it. "You may have noticed," I remark, "that the way it would be has already begun."

Outside, a cab is waiting at the curb. The driver, Billy Agnew, opens the door. He says, "Home as usual, Mr. Laramie?" I say, "Step on her, driver, home as usual."

IT IS not a long ride. Billy pulls up before the place and I assist Alicia out and tell Billy to put the charge on my bill, and we go downstairs. My heart is beating. I get out my key and open the door and—Alicia and I step into my home. It is wonderful. The flowers and plants are in the front windows. The windows open into a well, but it does not show tonight, we might be a hundred

down at Alicia, by my side. I have an impulse to take her in my arms and kiss her. She looks lovely, standing there in what might be our own home. I help her off with her things, tenderly. She is slender and lithe and beautiful, with her nose just the right tilt, for me. This, I think to myself, is just the way it would be.

She says, "And where is the gentleman's aunt?"

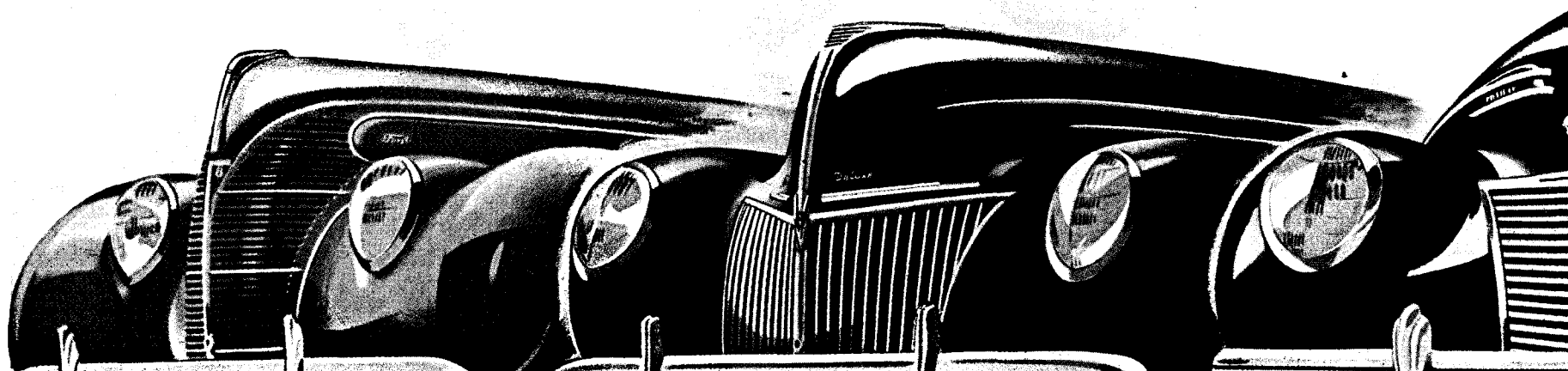
"She'll be here, don't worry," I tell her. "She's evidently a few minutes late. Now, Alicia, just sit down on the couch, there, and I'll soon have a roaring fire."

Alicia takes a deep breath and sits down on the couch. She says, "Bing, this is certainly a grand surprise." I do not reply. I am going around humming to myself; my whole soul is singing, singing. The fire is ready for lighting; Joe has fixed it up during the day. I kneel down and touch a match to the paper. It burns brightly. "There she goes," I

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THE MERCURY 8 is an advanced engineering. It fits into the Ford line Lincoln-Zephyr. It is sleek. It has a new 95-horsepower engine. It has a new 95-horsepower interior appointments and eight colors.

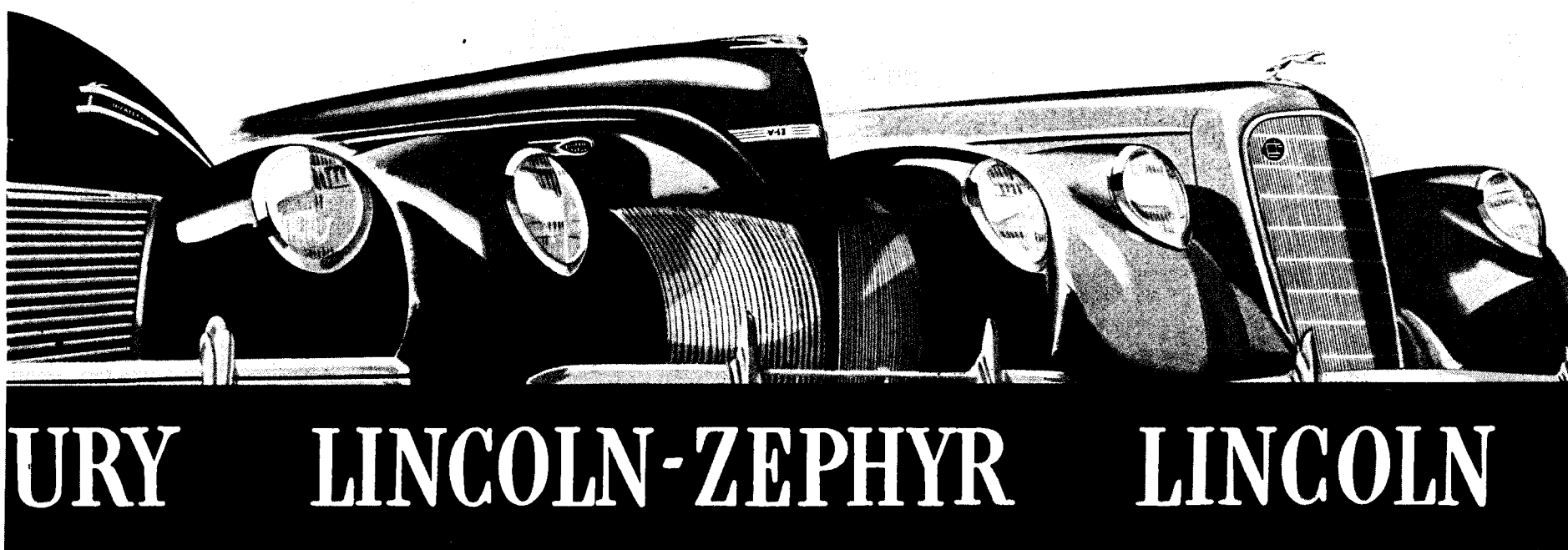
THE five new cars in the Ford-Lincoln line for 1939 give you a broad choice of more than thirty different models—from which you can pick the one that exactly fits your own ideas of size and style, power and price. Whichever you choose, whatever you pay, you'll get top value for your money.

• That's true of the lowest priced Ford. It's true of the

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THE LINCOLN-ZEPHYR is the acknowledged style leader among modern motor cars. Beneath its graceful streamlines, in closed types, is a unit-body-and-frame—the first structure of its kind. The Lincoln-Zephyr is powered by a V-type 12-cylinder engine. Owners report 14 to 18 miles a gallon. Performance is brilliant. The 1939 car has hydraulic brakes. Six body types, eight colors.

THE LINCOLN is built to be “the most nearly perfect motor car it is possible to produce”—without regard to cost. It comes from one of the world’s famous precision plants, where every operation is checked and rechecked. The result is a magnificent car with a V-type 12-cylinder engine respected around the world. There are many body types, including a wide range of designs by leading custom body builders.

its kind—where production processes are controlled from iron ore to finished car—and savings passed along as extra value.
• Typical of the quality in each car is its V-type engine—once found only in very expensive cars—and brought to all price fields only by Ford. V-type engines are compact and efficient. They deliver high power in proportion to their size—and smooth

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tell Alicia happily. "As soon as the wood catches, she'll begin to crackle and leap, and we can sit here—"

"The smoke is all coming out into the room," Alicia says.

"Just a little," I explain. But I am struck with terror. It is all coming out into the room. Maybe we should have tried the fireplace last night. The thought that it may be the wrong kind of fireplace suddenly occurs to me and I am cold and clammy all over. I get down on my hands and knees and blow. Smoke and pieces of burned paper come out into my face. I turn my head to get a fresh breath, and I blow again as hard as I can, and more smoke comes out into my face, and more burned paper, but I do not care, I blow until everything gets black before my eyes. I stand up. I am dizzy. The fire has gone out. I get a newspaper and crumple it and shove it under the wood, the best I can with my eyes watering the way they are, and light it again. It blazes up. I am delighted.

"Now, Alicia," I say, "for the surprise. If you will excuse me for a minute"—I pause for effect—"I will go out and open the oysters."

Alicia looks like she has bitten into a pickle. She says, "Did you say oysters?"

"Oh, not the common kind," I explain. "These are oysters on the half shell. They go fine with tea. I'll have them open in a jiffy. You stay here and watch the fire."

"You mean," Alicia says, "they are still in their shells?" I tell her they are. She says, "Bing, you may have a little trouble. They are a dreadful thing to try to open if you don't know how."

"It's a cinch," I tell her. "Those fellows at the oyster bars just go zip, zip—she's open."

Alicia says, "You are not a fellow at an oyster bar."

"I hope," I say in a dignified manner, "I can open a few heathen oysters. I am not entirely dumb." Well, this is our first quarrel. I turn away with my chin up and go behind the curtain, into my kitchen.

I STAND at the sink and pick up an oyster in one hand and my knife in the other, and start to slip the point of the knife into the crack where the shell comes together. The knife does not make any impression on this crack. The oyster is closed tight, and I discover that when an oyster is closed tight the point of a knife does not slip into it. But I have seen them do it thousands of times at oyster bars. They do it nonchalantly. I decide I am trying too hard. So I hold the knife nonchalantly in one hand and the oyster nonchalantly in the other and give the oyster a quick, devil-may-care jab. The knife still does not go into the oyster, but it slides along the shell and has no trouble at all going into my thumb.

I drop everything and hold my thumb under the water faucet. The water below my thumb is pink. I call out, "Alicia!" Alicia comes into the kitchen, coughing. She says, "What on earth has happened?"

I am getting angry at the oyster and the knife both. "The damn' knife slipped," I explain to Alicia. "Get out to the bathroom after some iodine."

Alicia says, "Where is the bathroom?"

"Out in the hallway," I tell her.

"Where do you think you are, Pelham Manor? Hurry, before I bleed to death."

Alicia hurries. She comes back with the iodine and a bandage. When she is fixing my thumb she asks, "How many oysters did you open?"

"One," I tell her. She glances toward the sink. "Not all the way," I explain. She finishes my thumb, and I move it around to see if it still works. Suddenly my eyes begin to water. I look around. The place is full of smoke.

"The fire went out," Alicia explains.

"It was burning away like a good fellow when I left," I tell her. "You should have—poked it."

"I did poke it," Alicia says stubbornly.

"Not enough," I tell her. I stop and cough a little. I go back to the fireplace and crumple up some more paper and stuff it under the wood and light it. It blazes. "Quick," I tell Alicia, "before I open any more oysters, let's sit here a few minutes before this damn' thing and watch it burn."

Alicia sits on the couch beside me. If you bow your head, you do not get so much smoke. But there is plenty of smoke, and I look at the fire. It is out.

There is a knock on the door. Al's aunt. I get up and go over and open the door. It is not Al's aunt. Gary is stand-

ing there, and behind him is Joe. They motion to me to come out in the hallway. I do so. Joe says:

"Bing, it's about Al's aunt. She got delayed at a cocktail party over in Brooklyn, but Al has phoned her and she has promised to get here as soon as she can."

Something begins to buzz in my head. "Cocktail party?" I say. "What are they doing with cocktail parties in Brooklyn?"

Gary says, "Young people will have cocktail parties any place."

I am feeling suddenly apprehensive, or worse. I ask, "How old is Al's aunt?"

"Twenty-four," Joe says. He adds, "Blond."

"Who is Al's uncle?" I manage to gasp.

"Blitz Arnold," Joe says. "He runs the Bathing Beauty Concession at Coney Island. He married her out of the exhibit."

I just stand there, swaying on my feet. Joe says, "They have only been married a short while. Gary and I just found this all out. We got to thinking, maybe she

isn't the right type. But we can't help it now. She's some place in the subway."

"She'll come in a cab," Gary said. "She told Al she wasn't feeling very well and Al told her to take a cab."

I have left the door to the apartment open, and the smoke is now coming out into the hall. Gary looks at the smoke. He says, "By the way, how is everything coming otherwise?"

I am suddenly in despair. I groan. "Fellows, Jack Haley has got a wife. The whole plan is a flop. The fireplace won't work, the smoke all comes out into the room, and I have already cut my thumb to the bone without opening a single oyster."

"Buck up," says Gary.

Joe says, "Keep a stiff upper lip."

We stand there and look at each other. Suddenly a light comes into Gary's eyes. He says, "Bing, I have got

anxious as you are to see the way it would be if we were married. I will stick to the bitter end."

What am I going to do? I can only stand there and inhale smoke and cough. Alicia says, "Maybe you could run out and get some chop suey."

No sooner said than done. I grab my hat and run out of the apartment and up to Lexington Avenue. A cab is passing. I hail it, and get in. "Take me to some place where I can get some chop suey," I tell the driver. He nods, puts the car in gear, and we drive straight into a traffic jam at Forty-second Street. We are in this jam a good five minutes, and I am jumping up and down on the seat. We get out of it and crawl up Lexington. We keep going. At Fifty-ninth Street I ask the driver, "How far do we have to go to get a little chop suey?"

He says, "I am heading for Harlem. The best place in town for chop suey is up in Harlem."

"But I'm in a hurry!" I yell at him. "Go to the first place there is!"

He looks around, injured. I have hurt his feelings. He says, "Oh, all right, if you say so, but you looked to me like a fellow that would want the best. You never can tell what you're going to get in one of these cheap joints. The place I have in mind, they have fine chop suey and the finest chorus—"

I AM out of the cab. I have tossed my last dollar bill to the driver and am running down toward Third Avenue. When I get to Third Avenue, there is no chop suey sign in sight. I start running south, and after while I spot a Chinese place up a side street. I turn in, dash up the stairs and order my chop suey. Double order. Best quality.

I wait. They have to send to China for it. So I wait.

Here it is, at last. It is in a big bag, and it is warm. I dig into my pocket. I dig into all my pockets. I have got forty-five cents. I show the money to the Chinese, and he takes my bag and disappears. He comes back in five minutes, having called up China for instructions, and gives me a bag that is much lighter. I take it and run down the stairs and up to Lexington and jump into a cab and give the driver my address and tell him to burn the pavement. He does the best he can, and we pull up at Thirty-seventh Street later in the evening, and turn in. There are some people on the sidewalk. They are in front of my place. So is a fire truck. We stop behind the truck. I have no money and I tell the driver to wait, somebody else is going to go on from here. I figure I will borrow the fare from the janitor, who lives across the hall from me. I jump out. I start down the steps into my apartment. I meet somebody coming up. It is Alicia.

"I got the chop suey," I tell her.

She says, "Good night. I'm going home."

Complete confusion tugs at my heart. My plans for the evening are going to smash before my very eyes. I say, "But, Alicia, you can't do this."

"The hell I can't," Alicia says. I have never heard Alicia swear before. She says, "Your home is too crowded. They won't even miss me. The fire department has put out the fire in the fireplace. They found that the only trouble was with the chimney. There is no chimney. Somebody has come down and opened all the oysters and they are being used in the Fire Department Special."

"What is the Fire Department Special?" I ask, for want of something to say. My knees are trembling.

Alicia says, "It is a drink the janitor invented. Each one has an oyster in it. The janitor and his wife and his niece and his wife's cousin came in, they said they thought it was a party. The firemen decided to stay. Your friend Gary is acting as waiter, and your friend Joe



"White man's diseases are unknown to these natives"

ROBERT DAY

ing there, and behind him is Joe. They motion to me to come out in the hallway. I do so. Joe says:

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"Blitz Arnold," Joe says. "He runs the Bathing Beauty Concession at Coney Island. He married her out of the exhibit."

I just stand there, swaying on my feet. Joe says, "They have only been married a short while. Gary and I just found this all out. We got to thinking, maybe she

it. I know some fellows who can fix that fireplace of yours in a jiffy. Some friends of mine." He turns and runs out into the street.

"Who has he gone after?" I ask Joe. I am beginning to get alarmed.

"The fire department," Joe says. "He knows all the boys." He snaps his fingers. "Bing," he says, "we'll pull out of this yet. A pal of mine, Mugs Lava-getto, works at an oyster bar. He's off duty at seven. I'll have him stop in here and he'll open all the oysters in the place before you can say Flatbush Follies."

JOE dashes out. I turn and stumble hopelessly into the apartment. Alicia has opened the windows and is standing in front of one of them, coughing. She turns around when I come in and says, "Bing, I'm nearly starved." What the hell next. I have an idea, a good one. I say, "Alicia, maybe we ought to go out and eat. We could go over to Dinty's and have some pickled—"

"No," Alicia says. Her stubborn streak comes to the surface. She says, "No, Bing, we'll not go out. I am just as

is putting cold cloths on Daisy's forehead.

"Daisy?" I gasp.

Alicia tries to push past me. "Get out of my way," she says in a hollow voice. I grab her with my free hand.

"Who is Daisy?" I demand of her.

She looks at me. "You ought to know," she says bitingly. "She came right after you left, and asked for you, then lay down on the couch and went to sleep. She's very beautiful, Bing, and I don't blame you. But—"

"Al's aunt!" I cry in agony.

"Al's great-grandmother," Alicia says witheringly. She twists away from me. She runs toward my cab. "Wait!" I cry. She does not wait. She gets in.

The door has slammed in my face. The cab has pulled away. Alicia is stuck for my fare.

I place my chop suey on the curb, take careful aim, and with a choking throb in my throat I kick it out into the middle of the street.

I AM sitting up in bed; I am trying to open my eyes. My eyes do not open very easily, and my head is not all it should be. I have dropped into the gutter last night and have taken a couple of Fire Department Specials, which I now regret.

I get my eyes open and look around my little home. I am surrounded by overflowing ash trays, finger-printed glasses, empty oyster shells, on all sides. The firemen have spilled chemical on the Colonial couch cover. I have forgotten to open a window and a weird odor fills the room.

All I can do is sit there in bed and groan. The bottom has dropped out of my world. Mrs. Jack Haley. Mrs. Jack Haley, Pelham Manor, New York.

Oh, Alicia, I had it planned— There is a knock at the door. The knock is repeated. I look at the door bitterly. At this point the door is pushed open. Alicia stands there.

She takes one look around, she does not even speak to me, and she hurries to the windows and opens them wide. She looks at the room, and her eyes are

feverish and she looks determined. She picks up as many ash trays and glasses as she can carry, and dashes to the kitchen with them. I jump out of bed and grab my bathrobe and put it on. Alicia comes back. "That kitchen!" she groans.

"Alicia," I say; but I am not in good voice and I have to clear my throat a few times. "Alicia, if I had known you were coming over—"

"I couldn't help it," she says, waving her arms around. "I knew it would be like this here this morning." She grabs some more ash trays.

I grab one, too. I follow her around. Alicia has now got hold of a broom someplace and she is sweeping the floor. I walk around with the ash tray in my hand. She says, "What are you doing with that ash tray?"

"I'm helping," I explain.

She sits down on the couch and puts her hands up to her face. After a while she takes them down and looks at me. She puts them back quickly. "That bathrobe!" she says, between her lovely fingers. "Bing, go look in the mirror. And you slept with the windows closed," she says.

"I forgot," I murmur. I really did.

Alicia takes her hands away from her face and looks at me. She says, "Bing, between thinking of how this place is going to look this morning, and being awakened by that crowd of rowdies, I haven't slept a wink all night. Why did you send those people down there?"

"It was Joe's idea," I explain. "It was his idea for him and Gary to take Daisy home and get the marriage license and take it down to your club and show it to you. They had to go to Brooklyn. I'm sorry," I add stiffly, getting on my high horse, "if my friends disturbed you. They only had my best interests at heart."

"Disturb me!" Alicia says. "No, they didn't disturb me. All they did was wake up the whole neighborhood, including me, at three in the morning. Waving that marriage license. Making that girl swear to me she was Al Arnold's aunt. Bing, the club I live in—the

club I used to live in—is a dignified—"

"Used to live in?" I gasp.

"Used to live in," Alicia says, sitting up straight. "I have been kicked out of the club. I have been given the—bum's rush. I have no home."

Mrs. Jack Haley, Pelham Manor, New York.

I sit down on the bed, suddenly, and it is my turn to put my hands up to my face. I have reached the end of my rope, but I can hear Alicia talking through the buzzing that is going on inside my head. She is saying:

"Bing, you can't go on like this. You don't sleep properly; you don't eat the right food; you're destroying your health. Cutting your hands to pieces in the kitchen, wearing a filthy old bathrobe. Your cronies cluttering up the place all night long, you drink Fire Department Specials—"

"Stop!" I implore her in a low, vibrant voice.

"Bing," she says earnestly, "you could be the best newspaperman in New York, if you'd take care of yourself. It's a waste. Look at this apartment. Look at the"—she stops, and takes a deep, shuddering breath—"look at the life you lead." She has got up, and has come over to me. I feel her cool, slim fingers on mine. She says:

"Bing dear, I love you. I simply can't live without you. Will you please marry me?"

Am I in the electric chair? A terrific shock has traveled through my body, from my heels to the top of my head. I am sitting there, rigid, waiting to be finished off. There is a strap around my throat. Somebody is hitting me on the back of the head with a blunt instrument. . . . Suddenly it all stops. Silence grips the world. Then faint, soft music comes to my ears. The sun floods the countryside. The birds begin to sing. I raise my head and look up.

Mrs. Bing Laramie, 135 East Thirty-seventh Street, New York City.

I AM standing under my shower. It's one of those things you get from the cut-rate drugstores and attach to the kitchen faucets.

"It's not much of a place," I call out to Alicia, who is making tea. "It's just a—cellar."

"It's home," Alicia says. "It's no mansion in Pelham Manor, but we don't need any mansion in Pelham Manor. It's small, but it's big enough for us."

"We could fix it up," I suggest.

"No," Alicia says. "I don't want a thing touched. I want it just as it is, Bing, the way you're used to it."

I am suddenly weak and empty inside. But I keep a stiff upper lip. After all, I have stout friends, and true. They will explain things to the hospital, the convalescent ward, the morgue, and the janitor of Joe's building. Besides, this is nothing compared to what I have been through. With the devoted help of my friends.

"Alicia," I call out, "do you suppose we could—I know you don't like my friends very well, but they're wonderful after you get to know them. Do you suppose we could have a sort of housewarming after we're married, and invite—"

"Of course, darling," Alicia says. Ah, there's that wonderful tenderness in her voice. "It would be nice, dear. After all, look what your friends have done for—us. I think they're lovely friends, Bing."

I am elated. I say, "Alicia, for the housewarming, we could build a fire in the grate, after the chimney is fixed, and we could open up a few oysters—"

"No," Alicia says gently. "No, Bing." She sounds like she is crying.

All right. Any old thing at all. I'll leave it to my wife, Alicia. I am ready to burst with joy. I am standing under my shower, singing, as my story closes.

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"Pardon me, but did you want your lamb chop medium or rare?"

LEONARD DOVE

Old Folks Preferred

Continued from page 11

"Will it be an expensive law to operate?"

"On the contrary. The administration will be childish simple. There will be no army of social workers to eat up the fund. The cost of collecting the tax will not be more than two per cent. The cost of distributing the checks will be another two per cent. To register, an applicant will pay twenty-five cents. This is estimated to bring in \$2,000,000 and that will take care of the cost of registering the pensioners."

Mr. Boorde seemed utterly sure of all this. If one objected that the bill would not create new spending power but merely transfer spending power from one age class to another, he cites his training in economics on various church mission boards. To those who contend that much of the pension money will be hoarded and that the "billions released" would soon become frozen again, he replies that "the world's psychologists have informed him otherwise" and urges that cynics study psychology.

"The pensioners," says Mr. Boorde, "would spend because of their need and for the sheer new joy of spending. This spending would increase the velocity of money circulation. This increased velocity will raise the nation's spending power—increase the demand for goods and services."

So one gets nowhere in the offices of the General Welfare Federation arguing that the purchasing power of the pensioners would be increased only to the extent that the purchasing power of those from whom the money is taken is reduced. Mr. Boorde replies by showing you that a hundred and sixty-four members of the 75th Congress signed the petition to bring the bill before the House, out of committee, proving that you're wrong. Two hundred and eighteen signatures will fetch it out. Mr. Boorde says that it's as good as done. And because the pension problem threatens to be one of the coming session's big moments, it's possible that he's right.

How to Balance the Budget

Under the General Welfare Bill, pensions would not be taxable. Beneficiaries, although receiving more than \$600 a year, would not be taxed two per cent on such gross income but anyone earning as much as \$600 in industry would have to pay.

"Don't think, though," says Mr. Boorde, "that this pension money will not pay taxes to keep itself in motion. The merchant with whom the money is spent will pay."

"Won't there be a tremendous opposition to broadening the income-tax base?"

"We are not broadening the income-tax base," says Mr. Boorde. "This has nothing to do with the regular income tax. If I know the people of America—and I do—no one is going to protest against paying a tax which will alleviate suffering, wipe out poverty and create prosperity."

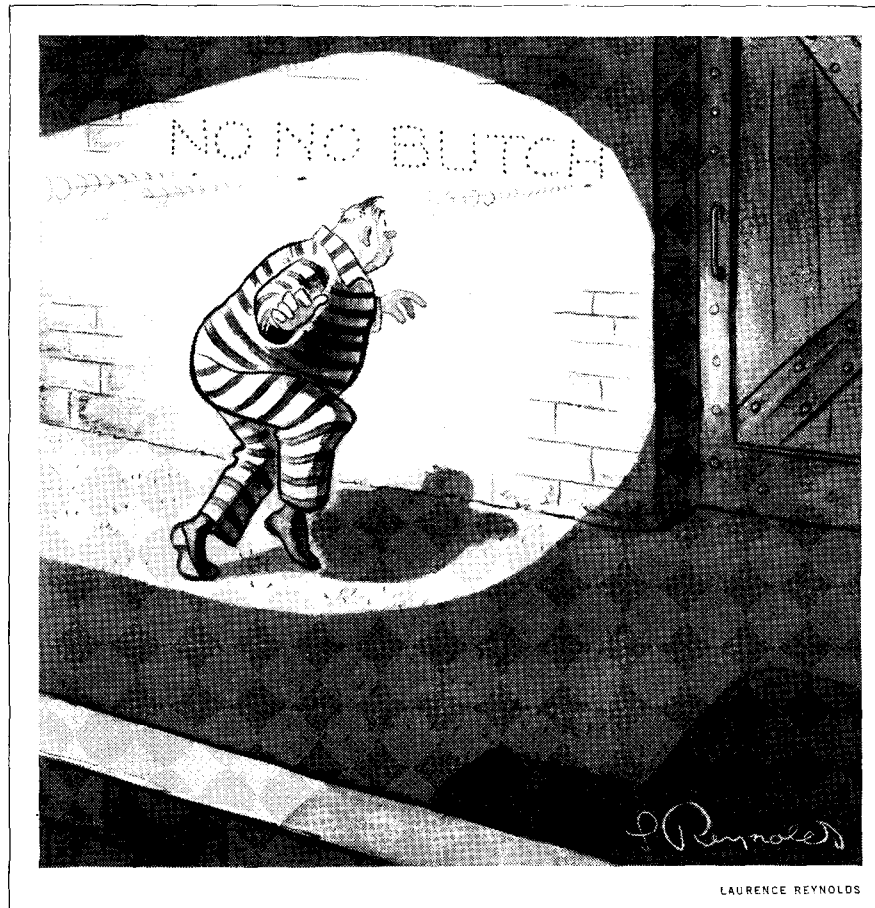
"Get out your paper and pencil," he said. "We expect that 8,000,000 eligibles will register at once. Say they are to get from sixty to seventy-five dollars a month. Call it \$480,000,000 a month or \$5,760,000,000 a year. Now note this: The pro rata figure will increase each month as that first year's income circulates—the result of the inexorable law of supply and demand—and brings in additional tax revenue. Is that clear? Well, sir, please accept it as fact."

"In time Congress may have to place

a ceiling for annuities—the growth of income will be so rapid. A few months of operation will guide Congress, which can then say that all income over a maximum pension of, say, one hundred dollars a month may go to the general fund of the United States Treasury or be used to pay off the national debt and balance the budget. But that is for Congress to decide. We are not a political organization. We are for a free and untrammelled Congress."

As Congress prepares to convene for better or worse, you see and hear the signs. Whether they're wearing the Townsend, the General Welfare Federation or the Thirty Dollars Every Thursday collar, large numbers of congressmen are descending on Washington eager to do something politically profitable for pension-hungry electorates. Under existing conditions the pressure is particularly heavy from Rhode Island, Vermont, Delaware, North Carolina, Kentucky, Michigan, Arkansas, Louisi-

ana, New Mexico and Texas. The pensions granted to the oldsters in those states range from Mississippi's six dollars, South Carolina's seven and Kentucky's nine to a luxurious fourteen in Vermont and West Virginia and sixteen in Indiana. And that's why the General Welfare Bill has an outside chance. And that's why you can't enter a congressman's office and not stumble over somebody with an old-age pension plan. Look them over.



LAURENCE REYNOLDS

There's the Rotenberry Plan from Arkansas—\$80 a month to each person over sixty whose income is not more than fifty dollars a month. There's the People's Annuity Plan—\$25 a week to everyone over 57 plus \$25 a week to each disabled person regardless of age plus \$12.50 to each widow whose income is less than a hundred a month plus \$5 for the first dependent child plus \$2.50 for each additional dependent child.

You find a famished-looking gentleman named Jameson carrying the banner for Democracy Annuities, Inc. He comes from Michigan. He wants the

war veterans, the General Welfare Bill, a two per cent transactions tax, collection of our European war debt, deporting aliens, outlawing all state port of entry laws and for a unicameral legislature. It's against some things too—"President Roosevelt's economic policy of scarcity and the New Mexico WPA wage scale."

Keep your eyes open and you'll find a noble-looking patriot who'll tell you of the splendors inherent in the Prosperity Pension Association of Texas. It stands for a flat grant of \$50 a month to each "disemployed" person over fifty. When that person reaches sixty he'll be eligible for \$75 a month. Moreover, he may have independent means of \$600 a year and own a home worth \$7,500. Fair enough.

And of course you'll hear lots about the Townsendish Citizens Retirement Annuity Plan of Oregon. It was rejected in November by Oregon but still advocates a two per cent transactions tax. The yield would be distributed pro rata among persons sixty-five years old and over. The original idea had it that the maximum pension would be \$100 a

month, which would have to be spent in Oregon. But of course if Congress heeded its champions and made The Oregon Plan the law of the land the money could be spent anywhere within the United States.

All of these vote traps, not all of which were insincerely conceived, were rejected by skeptical electorates at the state elections. But some of them were too dear to the hearts of their promoters to be abandoned. And still others approached the racket status, their promoters being rewarded by a steady flow of graft from a gullible public.

As Congress convenes you'll find them bobbing in and out of the Senate and House of Representatives offices hopeful of convincing somebody that they have the ultimate plan, the key to future permanent bliss. They're ready to make concessions if necessary—go along with the General Welfare Bill or even the Townsend Plan if only certain features of their own dreams can be tacked on.

But they're considerably less than likely to taste success. Just what Congress is going to do is more of a guess than we're equipped to answer. Perhaps the most the oldsters can hope for is a mild liberalization of the existing laws. For about two and a half years the federal government has been matching the states dollar for dollar per pensioner, up to fifteen dollars.

Why Wait?

If, as in Mississippi, the state can produce only \$2.03 per pensioner, the government contributes only \$2.03. Even in Mississippi this is not a living income—and nobody can prove that it is. New Mexico has found it possible to contribute no more than \$3.50. Therefore its oldsters rate a grand total of seven dollars a month. In Florida, Georgia and Arkansas the pension is lamentably small. In only one state—California—does the government contribute its maximum of \$15. To this California is adding about eighteen dollars. The expensive state of New York, with its towering income-tax rates, contributes only about twelve dollars to its aged eligibles, the government adding another twelve. In two and a half years about 1,800,000 elderly Americans have received about \$375,000,000 from Washington. Under the current setup the average is about twenty dollars per pensioner.

You get absolutely nowhere by telling the oldsters to be patient. They ask: "What's there to be patient about?" And you'll have quite a time rigging up a satisfactory answer.

Under the Social Security Act the new old-age insurance payments would not be made until 1942. And even if Congress moved this forward to 1940, the attitude of the potential pensioners is not changed much. Theoretically the monthly checks will be mailed to all those who, sixty-five years old, have been registered under the employer-employee joint contribution heading. They will receive, unless Congress raises the ante, various sums from ten dollars to eighty-five each month. On September 30th this employer-employee fund had reached the healthy proportions of \$766,300,000. By 1940 it will amount to about \$1,973,600,000. The Security Board estimates that if left alone it will be \$3,656,600,000 in 1942.

But all this is highly unsatisfactory to the oldsters. The vast majority of them will be in the lower brackets, eligible for from ten to twenty dollars a month.

So what's there to be patient about?

Hitler's Ward Heeler

By Paul Schubert



Josef Buerckel, whose job is to make Nazi elections 100 per cent safe for Adolf Hitler, and who seldom misses, addressing a meeting in Vienna prior to Austria's absorption by Germany

from undernourishment and bowed with trouble, heard a loud knock at the door of her mean dwelling in Vienna's slums.

Hobbling to answer, she found herself confronted by an imposing array of brown and black Nazi uniforms flanked by reporters and press photographers. Center of the impressive group was a stout man in a double-breasted trench coat just like Hitler's; he had light gray eyes, a big domineering nose in a fleshy face, the determined mouth and set chin characteristic of "Fuehrers."

"Mutterchen," announced an attendant stooge importantly, "Herr Kommissar Gauleiter Buerckel has come to honor you with a visit."

The boss placed a shiny brown boot over the threshold and surveyed the wretched little room. Then he turned and favored the reporters with a few well-chosen words of horror at the poverty that the "corrupt Schuschnigg regime" had permitted to exist. Flashlights immortalized the scene.

Next day the newspapers opened up the vox humana stop of the propaganda calliope, with Buerckel's tour of the slums a front-page feature. The boss had secured 5,000,000 Reichsmarks—over \$2,000,000—from the benevolent German treasury for the immediate relief of suffering.

The Boss is "Sold" to the Bossed

Such "build-ups" are the prerogatives of kings, presidents, prelates and sultans—never have they been used more successfully than by the Nazis in Vienna. Austria was sold on Buerckel's big heart. It was sold on his four years of loyal service as a World War soldier at the front. It was sold on his private life as a schoolteacher before he became a professional politician, when he sat in the classrooms of little German villages hearing recitations by rows of clean-scrubbed German youngsters. It was sold on the story of his swift, successful rise in the Hitler machine, to Gauleiter of the Saar-Palatinate, member of the German Reichstag, plenipotentiary and governor of the Saar District. It was sold on the fact that he was a Catholic—proof to Catholic Austria that Hitler would place Catholics in the highest offices provided they obeyed Berlin.

But the newspapers printed nothing on Buerckel's attitude toward other, unphotographed old ladies whose misfortune it was to possess non-Aryan blood. Austria was plunged into election fever. The Greater German Plebiscite was set for April 10th, a month off, when every Austrian would be allowed to go to the polls and vote Yes for Adolf Hitler and God help him if he didn't.

Buerckel's opening manifesto sounded the keynote in the plain language of Nazidom: "I prohibit every political activity throughout Austria except by persons having an authorization signed by me or my office. All other authorizations are null and void."

In other words, any form of opposition was illegal.

In Wildbach, a farming community about 100 miles from Vienna, perhaps a quarter of the people were anti-Hitler, though they weren't saying much these days. A majority of Wildbach's votes were naturally safe for Adolf Hitler and the Anschluss. The farmers, fed on tales of increasing prosperity in the German Reich, had been swinging that way for months. And still there were a lot of

ON MARCH 11, 1938, a rakish German touring car, long as a locomotive, threaded its way through Vienna's busy streets. The squat blond German next the driver was obviously a person of importance but no one gave him a second glance.

Austria was an independent state. Why should anyone be interested in Herr Josef Buerckel, a visitor from the German Reich, or in the cryptic numbers of his motor license plate SAAR 13135?

Yet man and license plate were of vital significance to the little country and her immediate destiny.

Vienna was agog with excitement. Chancellor Kurt Schuschnigg had just made an unexpected, dramatic announcement—the Austrian people were to go to the polls on Sunday, March 13th, on only three days' notice, and vote their approval or disapproval of the present form of government.

All Austria wondered how the Nazis would vote—that huge secret organization, loyal to Hitler, declared illegal by Schuschnigg. The Nazis had demanded an Austrian plebiscite for years. Now that Schuschnigg proposed one, would they accept it?

The man in the German motorcar knew the answer—knew that Adolf Hitler, deciding the Schuschnigg election was to be framed against him, had determined to take the entire play from Schuschnigg's hands, and conduct the plebiscite himself—Nazi style.

The die was cast. Austria's independence was doomed. Hitler was going to surprise-march his big brown army over the frontier at midnight and make little Austria safe for Nazi-crazy.

But the man in the street knew nothing of this. Skipping out of the way of Josef Buerckel's gleaming motorcar, he muttered: "You Germans behave as if

you owned Vienna," never dreaming that within twenty-four hours German ownership would be an accomplished fact—that by this time tomorrow the Austrians would be cheering their heads off for Herr Buerckel and bawling "Heil Hitler" with their arms thrust out like flagpoles.

Josef Buerckel, Hitler's election ace, sent to Vienna twelve hours before the first German soldier crossed the border, was a specialist in plebiscites—Nazi plebiscites of the kind favored by Adolf Hitler to demonstrate popular support for his deeds. Elections, as Buerckel conducts them, are totalitarian affairs, with the opposition browbeaten into a kind of pulp many an American ward-heeler would admire.

Another Job for Herr Buerckel

His unique license plate, SAAR 13135, commemorates the plebiscite held on the thirteenth of January, 1935, in the Saar District, when Buerckel, heading a Nazi steam roller, garnered a tremendous Nazi majority, 90 per cent of the Saarland vote, to return the district to German sovereignty—a slap in the face for the French, a gift to Adolf Hitler of territory containing a billion dollars in mineral wealth.

Now Buerckel had the task of repeating his Saar achievement in Austria.

When Austria awoke on March 12th, Schuschnigg had "resigned" and been placed under arrest—his political machine, the "Fatherland Front," was dissolved. The Nazi party had risen under arms overnight and seized the government. Arthur Seyss-Inquart, a Nazi puppet, had taken over the chancellorship, and Josef Buerckel, imported from Germany, was "Commissary Head of the NSDAP"—the party—boss of Austria, answerable only to the Fuehrer.

There were some 7,000,000 human beings in the Ostmark. Through Buerckel's control of the Nazi party, he held life-or-death sway over every one of them. He even controlled the chancellor, Seyss-Inquart. No American boss, operating at the head of an airtight political machine, ever had more unlimited power—Germany glorifies her bosses as gods.

Scores of Buerckel's opponents would meet financial, political or physical death during the coming weeks because of his rule. An estimated twenty thousand would be arrested and flung into prison without trial. A hundred thousand more would face misery, loss of property, forced emigration—but, on the other hand, hundreds of Nazis would be released from jails and concentration camps where they had been held for illegal activity during the Schuschnigg regime.

Buerckel began by organizing his plebiscite—the Nazi-style plebiscite ordered by the Fuehrer.

Election-fixing machinery is the same the world over—a combination of physical persuasion, statistical fakery and public bamboozlement. But even in Nazified Austria the new boss' activities needed sugar coating if he was to receive proper obedience.

Pleasure-loving and gay, Austrians are suspicious of slave-driving, harsh, unsympathetic Germans. Austria's Nazis had risen up in the name of Adolf Hitler, native Austrian son born in the village of Braunau—they had not expected to be placed under the command of a Josef Buerckel, born in Lingenfeld, in the Palatinate near the German Rhine—far from Vienna and the blue Danube.

Buerckel must be popularized.

Hence the curious experience of Frau Hermine Kipfl one March afternoon: The old lady, desperately poor, weak

people who didn't use the *Heil Hitler* greeting—strong Catholics, former Schuschnigg politicians, a few Hapsburg legitimists.

Wildbach's local Nazi leader came back from a conference in Vienna bearing the big boss' election instructions.

"Wildbach is expected to vote Nazi 100 per cent," he told his assistant.

"Can't be done. Eighty per cent, perhaps, but not a hundred. I know half a dozen who are going to vote No. There's Sepp Bauer, the blacksmith, for instance. And Abe Goldberg, the cobbler. Abe's a Jew—he'll never vote for Hitler."

"Jews won't vote at all. And Sepp Bauer won't either—I reported him in Vienna. He's going to a concentration camp."

The assistant pondered over the news, then began to smile. "We may get that 100 per cent after all," he commented.

"We'll answer to Buerckel if we don't."

Wildbach's "registration list" was shortly opened to public inspection. Actually it was not a registration list in the usual sense of the term, but a prepared list of voters. For half a dozen "legal" reasons, such as "suspicion of having Jewish blood" or of being "politically unreliable," all names not considered "safe" had been purged from it. Citizens "unable" to appear on the list were branded as public enemies.

Naturally everyone wanted to be on the list.

But once your name was included as a voter, you were confronted by two stern duties. First, you must appear at the polls—or a squad of brown-shirted Storm Troopers would come and get

you. And second, you must vote "Yes."

Never mind Hitler's promise that the election would be "free" and "secret." Wildbach was warned that the party would have ways of learning the identity of any "No" voters, and let the latter beware.

An estimated twenty thousand political opponents like Sepp Bauer, who might have led some form of resistance, were marched away as "public enemies."

Buerckel ordered a personal visit to every voter in Austria. If questions as to the voter's intentions brought out anything suspicious, his name came off the list. "Take no chances," said the boss.

Throughout the country, villages like Wildbach were decorated with tall pylons covered with red bunting and topped by golden swastikas. Pictures of the Fuehrer were in every shop window, in the post office and the railway station. All railway locomotives carried the swastika, and so did all motor busses and trucks. City halls and public buildings were aflame with Nazi red.

The Opposition Pays the Bills

In Vienna, Boss Buerckel had levied a "fine" of double the amount contributed by each supporter on the list of the confiscated Schuschnigg campaign fund. This huge "collection" paid the cost of the tons of campaign literature with which the country was flooded—leaflets, dodgers, pictures, free magazines.

Buerckel's innumerable mass meetings and torchlight processions were broadcast by radio. He set up soup kitchens, paid the rent for thousands of poor families, harangued noonday gath-

erings of factory workers, sent special trainloads of ex-Socialists to Germany to learn Hitlerism at first hand, gave children free holiday trips to the Reich and most important of all, distributed jobs to men who had been out of work.

The setup was 100 to 0. The plebiscite campaign, a sure Nazi victory, was conducted in a whirlwind drive greater than any ever staged by Tammany Hall.

When election day rolled around Austria was in a fever of excitement unprecedented in all its long history. Imperial Vienna, setting the pace, fluttered with blood-red bunting, millions of black swastikas leaping out from the white circles in the centers of the flags. The Hapsburg Palace, the Ring, the noble old public edifices, were ribbed with the vertical red stripes of Nazi decoration.

And still there was a question as to whether Wildbach village would get its 100 per cent.

Anny Braun, Sepp Bauer's pretty sweetheart, was in a quandary. Her Sepp had been taken away to a concentration camp and she hated the Nazis—she burned to spoil their 100-per-cent record, to vote "No" if it was possible to do so.

The question on the printed ballot read: "Do you favor the reunion of Austria with Germany concluded on March 13, 1938, and do you vote for the Reichstag candidates proposed by our Fuehrer, Adolf Hitler?"

Beneath the question there was a large circle in the center of the ballot, marked "Yes," and a much smaller circle to one side, marked "No." Every voter had been instructed where to put his cross—in the large circle.

Then the ballots were to be folded,

sealed in envelopes, and dropped into the ballot box.

But Anny, waiting nervously in line, saw the man in front of her waive the use of an envelope. "*Herr Gott!*" he roared. "What have I got to conceal? My vote is for Hitler! *Sieg Heil!*"

Anny's heart was beating hard as she took her ballot. "I want an envelope, please," she said. The election official, surprised, gave her one. "You don't need it, you know," he assured her. "Not if you're going to vote right."

Anny went inside the polling booth and looked at the envelope. It was thin as tissue paper—you could see right through it if you held it to the light. Then she realized what a trap she was in. If she marked her cross in the "No" circle and folded her ballot the way you were supposed to, the X would be clearly visible.

What choice did she have? With a desperate shake of the head she took up the pencil and made her cross—in the "Yes" circle. She folded her ballot, put it in the envelope, and carried it outside.

The official held it up toward the window, casually.

"Good girl, Anny!" he praised.

A Man Who's Going Places

That night Wildbach telegraphed its election result to Vienna. One hundred per cent of the registered voters had come to the polls. One hundred per cent of them had voted "Yes."

Aided by thousands of Wildbachs, and by squelching the half million non-Aryan votes in Vienna, Boss Buerckel's machine-controlled Austria had done nearly as well. Ninety-nine and seventy one-hundredths per cent of the registered voters had voted, and 99.74 per cent of them had put their crosses in the "Yes" circle.

In an orgy of triumph, Buerckel radio-broadcast the news to his chief: "For the second time, *mein Fuehrer*, I have the happiness to transmit to you a people's answer to a question submitted by you . . . Austria belongs to Germany and its Fuehrer forever . . . During the war you were a front-line messenger—now you have become a messenger for the Lord God. You are the most German of all Austrians!"

Buerckel got one curious reward—a new license plate for his Mercedes. It read "OSTMARK 10438"—Austria 10 April 1938.

But that was only a forerunner of Hitler's acknowledgments. Watch Buerckel—he's on the way up. Prominent in Nazidom since 1935, he has now become famous. Germans speak of him respectfully as a possible successor to the Fuehrer himself on the inevitable, fateful day when the Fuehrer enters Valhalla.

For the time being Buerckel has been named "Commissar for the Consolidation of Austria with the German Reich." Hitler has given him a year's dictatorship of Austria with orders to whip things into shape, make the *Ostmark* a full-fledged unit of Nazi Germany.

Big-hearted Buerckel turned off his benevolence after the election. That's the way it is with bosses—nothing for nothing. No more visits to the slums, no more free rent, no more soup kitchens—nothing but work, now, the crack of the whip, and obedience.

Tammany Hall à la Nazi, that's all.

Germans and Austrians, mostly servant girls, working in England under permits, boarded a holiday ship last March, sailed out of British waters, enjoyed free beer and food, danced, and voted on German annexation of Austria. Fifty anti-Nazis were barred from ship. The vote—Yes, 1,968—No, 10



Strange Honeymoon

By Octavus Roy Cohen

ILLUSTRATED BY ELMORE BROWN

The Story Thus Far:

JUDITH CLAYTON'S father dies, leaving a large estate. His will provides that his brother-in-law, Jonas Morgan, is to be the sole executor; also, that Judith (his only heir) is to take over the estate when she is twenty-one—if she is married.

Several years later, Judith learns that Morgan is misappropriating her funds. Anxious to avoid scandal, she does not take the matter into the courts—she looks over the men she knows and picks one—Alan Hughes—as a possible husband. Then, to the amazement of Martha Hastings, who shares her apartment, she proposes to Alan. And Alan—reluctant at first to co-operate—finally yields to her pleas and marries her!

Alan Hughes is an attractive man. Reared in luxury by an indulgent father who, dying, had left him a handsome town house in New York City and only a small income, he is averse to the idea of being supported by his rich wife. Nor does he want a wife. But with Judith he has no marital obligations. It is understood that both he and Judith are to be free to go their separate ways, do what they please. . . .

Alan has one enemy: Joe Carter. Carter, once the owner of a crooked gambling establishment, has never forgiven Alan for exposing him, forcing him out of business. Again and again, Angel Fremont, a clever girl-about-town whom Alan likes and finds amusing, and Gene Lyons, who owns an escort bureau, warn Alan that Joe Carter is planning to get revenge. But Alan does not take their warnings seriously.

Then Carter strikes. In a fast car, he follows Alan and Angel while they are motoring, late at night, on a lonely Long Island road. He so maneuvers his car that Alan, going at seventy miles an hour, is forced to leave the road—and crash into some obstacle. Alan's car is wrecked; Alan is knocked unconscious. When he comes to, he is in a bed in a hospital. Angel, uninjured, is standing beside the bed.

A few minutes later, Angel (who has telephoned Judith, and told her of the accident) is preparing to put Alan into a hired car, and carry him—to his wife.

IV

JUDITH replaced the telephone on its little stand beside the bed, but she continued to stare at it as though fearful that it would ring again.

"Alan's hurt," she said again and again, "Alan's been hurt . . ." and then, as though finally impressed by the import of her own words, she slipped out of bed and reached for her navy and white flannel robe. She pressed the buzzer that connected with Jenkins' room, and while waiting for him she slipped her feet into a pair of fur-topped mules.

Sleep had vanished from her eyes, and her brain was crystal clear. She tried to remember the exact words Angel had used, and the inflection on each word. She struggled to convince herself that if the accident had been at all serious, Alan could not, at this moment, be on his way home. But despite sane arguments and sound logic, she realized that her heart was pounding uncomfortably and that her body was trembling under the sheer nightgown. "I—I must be cold," she thought.

She crossed the room and closed the window, shutting out the wintry blast that iced in from outside. She walked up and down, saying to herself, "Chin up, Judith . . . chin up." Then there was a knock on the door, and in answer to her "Come in," Jenkins appeared. The sight of him was comforting, even though it made her want to cry. Jenkins meant so much to Alan . . . so much more than she herself meant, in fact. She'd have to be gentle in the way she broke the news to him . . . well, that was natural: you were considerate of others when you knew that they cared for a person.

"Jenkins," she said, with what she fancied was superb calm, "there's been a slight accident. Mr. Alan has been hurt. I don't believe it is serious. Miss Fremont telephoned. She said they were on their way here—now. I think we'd better get his room ready."

She thought she had been very quiet and placid, that she successfully had concealed what she really

Gene said, in a voice that somehow conveyed a feeling of safety: "I'll stick close to him, Mrs. Hughes"



felt. She was quite proud of herself until she saw Jenkins' expression. He moved a step closer to her, and said gently, "May I get you a glass of water, Mrs. Hughes? Or a stimulant, perhaps? You mustn't be upset . . . really now. Mr. Alan's all right. I know he is. You just take it easy for a minute, and I'll be right back."

And she had been trying to reassure Jenkins! She said to herself, "You're not to cry! You're not! And there's nothing to be frightened about." But she felt herself weakening before Jenkins' kindly understanding. When he returned with a glass of water, she made an extra effort to master herself.

"Don't you think I'd better telephone Dr. Johnson?"

"Yes, ma'am. I think you'd feel better if you did."

She'd feel better. You'd think Jenkins was concerned about her . . . not about Alan. She heard herself saying, "Miss Fremont is coming with him, Jenkins. They were out riding—"

"I understand." There was a wealth of wisdom and comprehension in Jenkins' voice. "Please don't worry, Mrs. Hughes. This isn't the first time Mr. Alan's had a bit of a crack-up. Not reckless . . . you wouldn't say that, exactly. But then, not so very cautious, either. It's happened before, ma'am—several times. He has a sort of genius for coming out all right."

"You know so much about him, Jenkins . . ." She started to add, "And I know so little."

"You call Dr. Johnson," suggested Jenkins adroitly, knowing that even the simplest of tasks would have a relaxing effect on her tightened nerves. "I'll see that Mr. Alan's room is fixed up. And meanwhile, just don't you worry, ma'am. Everything is all right."

Jenkins smiled and left the room.

Judith dialed Dr. Johnson's number

and tried to make her tone matter-of-fact. It was only when his voice boomed at her from the other end, "Quit worrying, Mrs. Hughes. Alan's okay," that she realized what a poor performance she had put up. She replaced the telephone and moved to the dressing table and commenced making herself presentable. She ran a comb through her thick, brown hair, and looked into eyes so wide and startled that she scarcely recognized them as her own. She added a touch of rouge to mask the betraying pallor of her cheeks. Then she slipped out of the woolen robe and chiffon gown into a pair of black velvet lounging pajamas. By the time she had fastened the last frog and tied the silk cord around her slender waist, she heard the doorbell.

JENKINS was opening the door as she came down the stairway. He admitted the visitor and spoke to Judith. "I took the liberty of making some coffee, Mrs. Hughes. Would you and Dr. Johnson like some?"

"We would," boomed the doctor emphatically. "And now, young woman, what's all this foolishness about Alan getting you and me up at this ungodly hour?"

"Miss Fremont telephoned . . ." She paused uncertainly. Every time she started this way, she felt a wave of resentment that her own common sense told her was unjustified. She was thinking, "If you had gone with him when he asked you . . . If you had gone with him, she wouldn't have been there . . . If you had gone with him, the accident might not have happened." Then, with an effort, she finished: "Miss Fremont telephoned to say that she was bringing him

home, and that the injuries weren't serious."

"We'll talk about that in a minute," said the doctor. "Right now we both need coffee."

The steaming coffee worked miracles. And Judith was reassured by the doctor and his calm assumption that there could not possibly be anything serious. He conversed about other things, placidly; as though she were the important patient.

The bell rang again, and Jenkins was there, opening the door, admitting the cold wind and a big, burly, broad-shouldered man in chauffeur's cap, who was helping Alan. There were Jenkins and this chauffeur . . . but most vividly of all, she saw the bandages in which Alan was swathed, and her nostrils were assailed by the odor of antiseptics. She wondered whether that was what made her feel so faint.

Alan grinned at her and succeeded in giving a weak wave of his right hand. He said, "Your first experience at having a husband brought home. I'll try not to make a practice of it."

They placed him on the couch in the library and she seated herself on a hassock beside him. She said, "Alan . . ." but again she knew that her eyes must have betrayed her, because she heard him saying, "Hey, there! Relax! I'm okay."

She heard Angel's pleasantly husky voice explaining, "He's kind of dopey, Mrs. Hughes. The doc over there gave him a shot of morphine," and then she heard Dr. Johnson asking crisp, clinical questions. Judith got to her feet and said, "Would you like us to get him to bed, Doctor?"

"Right. Lend us a hand, Jenkins."

She watched the physician and Jenkins assisting the uncertain Alan upstairs, and then, for the first time, she became vividly aware of Angel Fremont.

Her first thought was, "She's beautiful. I don't blame Alan," and then she remembered the experience through which this girl had just been. "You poor thing," she said with genuine sympathy, "no one has even asked if you're all right."

"Sure," answered Angel. "I'm okay. Sorry I had to throw such a scare into you. I—" She started to say, "I didn't know you cared so much," but she changed it abruptly to, "I must look like hell."

"You're beautiful—"

"Thanks. But battered."

Judith started across the room. "How about a little brandy?"

"You've got swell ideas."

JUDITH was back in an instant with a bottle of cognac and two glasses. "We both need it," she said. "I've been discovering a lot of things . . . the most important of which is that I'm not half as good in a domestic emergency as I thought I'd be."

"Well, it did come rather sudden . . . waking you up at two o'clock in the morning."

"I admire you. You're so calm about it all . . ."

"You should have seen me two hours ago. I was all set to fling the most beautiful fit of hysterics you ever saw."

"Why didn't you?"

"I . . ." Angel flushed. "I don't know. I guess somebody had to do something."

"You've been magnificent."

"Skip it," said Angel, and looked away.

They sat there together, these two utterly different girls, and each was

Through the mind of each flashed the thought, "She thinks he's in love with me," and each wished fervently that it were true



thinking, "She loves him. I wonder if he knows it?" And each was adding mentally, "He'd be a fool not to love her, too."

It was Judith who broke the rather tense silence. She said, "I haven't any idea what happened. Do you mind talking about it?"

"Sure. I'll talk. You see, there was a ditch—"

"But Alan's such a good driver."

"Not when he gets pushed off the road." Angel hesitated, but only briefly. "I reckon there's no sense holding back. You see, that wasn't any accident."

"Not an accident . . . ?"

"Nope." She faced Judith squarely. "Did Alan ever mention a little mix-up that occurred in Joe Carter's gambling house about a month ago?"

"You mean the time he exposed the crooked wheel?"

"Yeh. Well, that finished Joe Carter, and he's been making threats against Alan ever since. It was Joe Carter who sideswiped him tonight. And believe me, he wasn't foolin'."

"You mean," inquired Judith, and this time her voice was really steady, "you mean Carter tried to murder him?"

"Just about."

Judith said, half to herself, "It's hard to believe. . . ."

Angel looked away from the expression in Judith's eyes. She was thinking, "Well, why not? I'd look like that if I was married to Alan and somebody tried to bump him off." Aloud, she said, "It's truth, all right. And I'm giving you the straight dope, because somebody's got to knock a little sense into Alan's head."

"I see. . . . You mean that while Carter didn't succeed this time . . . he might . . . the next? Is that it?"

"Uh-huh. I don't want to scare you, Mrs. Hughes—"

"Judith, please."

"I'm not trying to scare you, Judith, but you asked me and I'm telling you. I'm afraid there *will* be a next time, and that when it happens there won't be any miracle handy to save Alan's neck."

Judith put her hand over Angel's.

"What are we going to do about it?" she asked. "I need your help and your advice."

They heard the doctor descending the steps, and then he was in the room, smiling down at them.

"Can't hurt that boy. He's cut and battered, and he's had a bit of a shock, but the doctor on Long Island did a nice job of suturing. You did the smart thing, Miss Fremont, in getting him to a hospital right away."

"IT'S marvelous. It's wonderful. It's perfect . . ." Alan shook his head. "But I still can't get all het up about it."

Judith smiled at him across the backgammon table. She said, "I began to suspect that . . . along about yesterday."

"Have I been that obvious?" He grinned. "I tried my darnedest."

"You played that last game with a startling lack of passion, Alan. There was a definite don't-give-a-damnness about the way you shoved your men around the board."

"Evidently I'm not destined to have secrets from you. It's a disturbing thought. If a man can't fool his own wife, whose wife can he fool?"

She smiled at him: Alan and his few remaining bandages, Alan who gave the appearance of the small boy kept home from school and then forbidden to go out and play: restless and more than a trifle on edge. She asked, sympathetically, "Has it been so terrible?"

"It's been perfect . . . sitting around with you, talking about world politics and other instructive things, discussing books and music, playing backgammon and double-dummy bridge, marveling at how long it takes superficial cuts to

heal. Perfect, Judith—but not exactly up my alley."

"Craving to get out and play, is that it?"

"Why not? And I must have gotten on your nerves pretty badly."

She wanted to say, "You'll never know how I've loved it, and you'll never know how I've reveled in taking care of you. You'll never understand what it has meant to me to do things for you, to have you here hour after hour, day after day." But what she actually said was, "You've been a very good little boy."

THE doorbell rang and they saw Jenkins moving through the reception hall, closely followed by the alert Nuit d'Amour. Alan and Judith rose, and went to greet their guests: Angel Fremont in a simple blue suit, trimmed with a red, polka-dotted material; Gene Lyons tall and handsome and suavely impressive. . . .

They sat in the library, and Jenkins served the cocktails and produced a

"Meaning exactly what?" asked Alan.

"Joe Carter."

"Hasn't he had enough fun?"

"Not half."

Alan made a gesture of impatience. He said, "I suppose I'm dumb—"

"He's getting wise to himself," interjected Angel.

"Enough from you, smart gal." Alan was speaking seriously. "You and Angel do a lot of talking, Gene, but you don't give any advice. You're supposed to know all the answers, so tell me this: What the devil can I do?"

"That's what I've been trying to figure."

"And you haven't gotten to first base, have you?"

"No."

"You see . . ." Alan was looking at Gene, but his words were couched in the form of an explanation to Judith: "You see, I'm up against a queer problem. Obviously, I can't run to the police and say, 'Look, a man is mad at me.' I can't even accuse him of trying to shove me

can do about a situation, the smartest thing is for him to do it."

"That," vouchsafed Angel, "sounds screwy enough to be smart."

Gene said, "Carter will go slow for a while."

"What makes you think that?"

"Because he figures you might make a move. He made his play and failed to scramble you. So for a week or two he'll wait to see what you might do."

"He'll have fun waiting. . . ."

Judith said, tensely, "I have an idea."

"Yes . . . ?"

"Why can't Alan hire someone to keep an eye on Joe Carter? Day and night? Then if he tried anything . . ."

Alan walked across the room. He said, "You make me talk like a damned hero, and I'm nothing of the sort. But I simply can't check in with that. I'm free, white and considerably more than twenty-one. I appreciate all this interest in me, but I haven't reached the bodyguard stage. And I believe that Carter will let well enough alone."

"You *don't* believe that," stated Judith quietly.

"Maybe I do, and maybe I don't. I'm not going to run away from what might happen, nor am I going to hire somebody to keep it from happening. The whole thing is a mess, but I prefer to take it in stride."

"Aren't you letting your masculine pride run away with you?"

"No. It's common sense. I don't believe there's anything I can do . . . even what you suggest . . . that would really be effective. And I'm not going to run around with my tail between my legs. That's final."

"It's final," echoed Angel. "Final words spoken by the finest of men."

ALAN grinned sheepishly. "You make me feel thoroughly juvenile. I don't like it."

"Be suggestive," said Angel.

"I shall. Let's change the subject."

"Original thought. What'll it be: weather or politics?"

"What do you suggest, Judith?"

"Well, you might discuss what you're going to do now that you're a well man again."

Alan grinned. "Now you're talking. Let's see: What does a man usually do when he's released from prison?"

"He's had a grand time staying home," explained Judith. "He's so domestic."

"If he was my husband," volunteered Angel, "I'd keep him on a leash."

"I've got a yen to go wild and woolly in a large way. I want to catch New York by the ear and twist it."

"You've got the training and the ability," Angel seemed to favor the program. "When does it start?"

"Tomorrow night."

"I'll sleep till three p. m."

"You and Gene and Judith—"

"In the words of the famous," smiled Judith, "include me out." I'm afraid I'm not the type."

Angel asked, "You no like?"

"Me no like. But I like Alan to like. Freedom at last. Men have sacrificed more for less."

Judith felt Gene Lyons's dark eyes focused intently upon her. She knew that he was thinking and thinking hard. But it wasn't until they were ready to go that she found a moment alone with him. She asked, "Is Alan being foolish?"

"No," he answered gravely, "there's really nothing he can do about it."

"I'm worried."

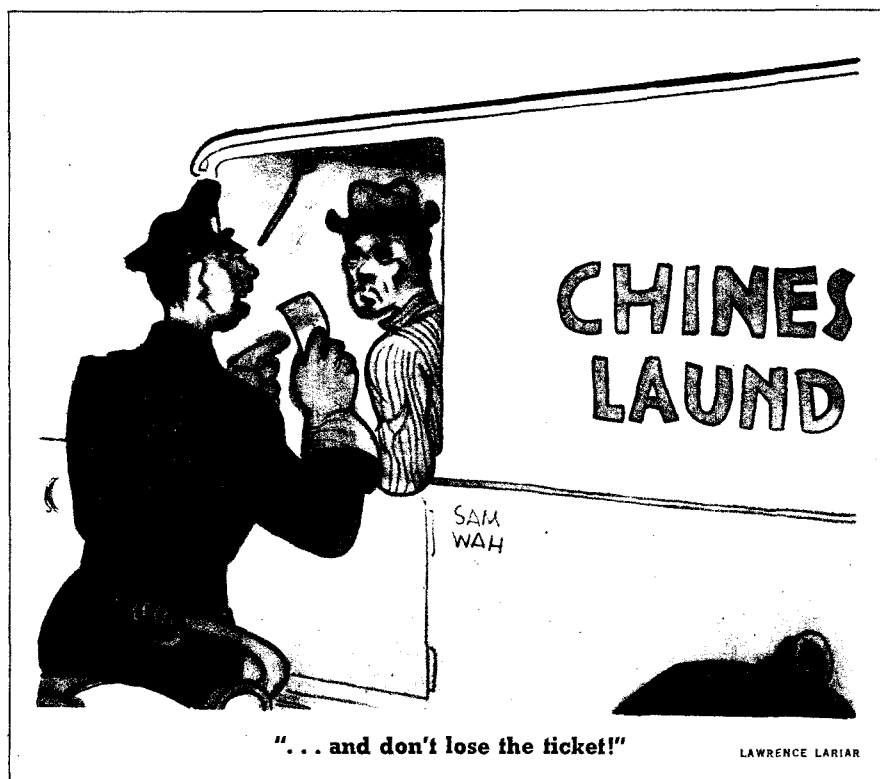
"I can guess."

She met his eyes squarely. "You know a lot more than you ever say."

"Sure."

"I'd hate to have anything else happen, Mr. Lyons."

Gene took her two hands in his. He said, in a quiet voice that somehow



huge silver tray of canapés. They inquired about Alan's injuries, they chatted idly of inconsequential matters, they brought Alan news of his friends in the mazda belt, and edified him with choice morsels of gossip. Gene Lyons did most of the talking, and Judith had a chance to study him.

Instinctively, she liked the man. It was obvious that his suavity had been acquired by hard study, and his social polish by imitation. Watching him closely, Judith fancied that she detected an invisible coat of armor, though whether it was worn as protection against the world or against himself, she wasn't sure. Certainly his eyes were filled with ageless wisdom, and one could believe that there was little of illusion in his outlook on life.

She wondered, too, about his relationship to Angel. That, she figured, was anybody's guess. There was a possessiveness, a taking for granted, an acceptance of intimacy . . . and yet she wasn't sure. It wasn't that Judith was prudish, nor that she shied from facing facts; but by the same token, she was not inquisitive. She was interested now only insofar as Lyons' relationship to Angel affected Alan.

She had been listening with half an ear to the bright gossip of a world to which she had never belonged. It was only when she heard Gene Lyons say, "What's in the books from now on, Alan?" that she listened.

into the hereafter four nights ago. I've always understood that cops want proof, and what have I got?"

"I was with you," suggested Angel.

"That'd be hot stuff, too. So far as the public is concerned, I'm a normally married man. And I bring as a witness a very beautiful young lady with whom I was joy-riding when the thing happened. If you were a cop, Gene—what would you say to that?"

Lyons shook his head. "I'd have my own ideas."

"Sure. And where does that leave me? Just where I was before, except that I'm not taking it lightly. I know now that Joe Carter is serious. I believe you're right when you say he isn't through. But what to do about it is something else."

JUDITH said, "Laws are pretty queer, aren't they? We can't prove the one crime Carter has actually committed, and there's no defense against what he might do in the future. It doesn't seem to make a lot of sense."

"Alan can watch his step," said Angel.

"Watch my step!" Alan made an impatient gesture. "How in thunder does a man watch his step? That sounds grand and adds up to zero. I figure the best thing I can do is drift along as I naturally would . . . wait a minute! I'm not being brave or silly or anything like that. I'm trying to be sensible. It strikes me that when there's nothing a man

Here's what we mean



by active editing

Panaceas, as well as fruit, flourish in the fertile soil of California. It was no surprise when Collier's Mr. X in Los Angeles tapped out the cryptic words, "Watch out for ham-and-eggs." Those pension plans again! Collier's lost no time; the next morning's early sun in Glendale saw Walter Davenport climb from a sleeper plane.

America's foremost reporter traveled, listened, noted and wrote . . . "California Scrip Tease." Rivalling the satires of Jonathan Swift, this slashing article quickly caught the attention of commentators and columnists. Winchell wrote, "By all means read Davenport's

'California Scrip Tease' . . . he reveals how crack brain and dangerous the pension plans are."

Then the deluge! National attention focused on this Utopian dream; other magazines contributed versions of the "thirty dollars every Thursday" scheme, some appearing fully a month after Collier's broke the story.

It's a tribute to the power of the printed word that this proposal was soundly defeated on Election Day, but Gene Buck, President of ASCAP sums it up when he writes, "Davenport's article was the finest piece on the plan I read; it crystallized public opinion on the



T H E C R O W E L L P U B L I S H I N G C O M P A N Y

Coast—and showed the voters how ridiculous and menacing this Referendum was. Congratulations!”

That’s what we mean when we say “*Active Editing.*”

“California Scrip Tease” is only one example of the fruit of Collier’s loom. On almost every important national and international situation, Collier’s presents the *facts first and presents them dramatically*—and wins immediate action! There is one reason, and one reason alone, why Collier’s seeks dramatic news-beats.

And that reason is—THE ACTIVE MARKET! More than 2,630,000 active families in this country have learned to look to Collier’s for the last-minute, exciting picture of the world in which they live. To attract and to hold this type of reader, Collier’s staff writers traveled more than a quarter of a million miles last year in search of *first facts*. And for these people, the active segment in the national market, Collier’s produced in 1938, the following scoop articles:

SOME INTERNATIONAL SCOOPS IN COLLIER’S THIS YEAR

MEN WITHOUT MEDALS—Martha Gellhorn. Americans at the Spanish front. (1-15-38)

MURDER IN THE TROPICS—Quentin Reynolds. Scooping the newspapers. (1-22-38)

WHEN RUSSIA MARCHES—Jim Marshall. Half a year ahead of the rifle fire. (2-5-38)

JIM FELT LUCKY—Norman Alley. Panay cameraman account of Jim Marshall’s Japanese jam. (2-12-38)

TWELVE AGAINST THE GODS—Hugh S. Johnson. Industry’s All-America. (3-12-38)

DEAR PENSIONER—John T. Flynn. First warnings on the pension plague. (4-16-38)

FAREWELL TO ASIA—Jim Marshall. The decline of the white man’s supremacy. (4-30-38)

OUR MUSCLE BOUND NAVY—Comm. Evans cries for better navy efficiency. (6-11-38)

THE NAZIS GOT ME—First first-person account of life in Nazi prisons. (6-18-38)

COAL BLACK AND THE 7 DWARFS—John T. Flynn. Goring the Guffey Act. (7-9-38)

RELIEF GOES WRONG—Primary warnings about political relief. (7-16-38)

LAMB OF WALL STREET—John T. Flynn. First popular magazine biog on McMartin, Stock Exchange Prexy. (7-30-38)

COME AHEAD, ADOLF—Martha Gellhorn. Czechoslovakia would have fought IF—. (8-6-38)

DEATH IN HEADLINES—J. Edgar Hoover. News tips to criminals. (8-13-38)

DICTATORS ON DYNAMITE—Winston Churchill. A world warning. (9-3-38)

JAPAN’S DICTATOR—W. B. Courtney. Scooped

the dailies on Konoye’s dictatorship. (10-1-38)

GUNS AGAINST FRANCE—Martha Gellhorn. What LaBelle France can do. (10-8-38)

GOOD INTENTIONS WON’T PAY PENSIONS—Walter Davenport. Colorado has a pension and it’s a pain. (10-29-38)

WHAT’S WRONG WITH ROOSEVELT—Bruce Barton. Dissecting F.D.R. (11-5-38)

THE COLONY RACKET—Winston Churchill. Who’s fooled by that red herring. (11-19-38)

WHY DO THEY HATE THE JEWS—Albert Einstein. The world’s greatest living Jew. (11-26-38)

TO BE MY PRIDE AND JOY—W. B. Courtney. War in China means a box of ashes to Jap mothers. (12-17-38)

It isn’t surprising, therefore, that American business should look upon Collier’s audience with ever-increasing favor! Active souls . . . those who “go-get-and-do” buy faster and are generally well-heeled. It’s not

amazing that advertisers invest more dollars in Collier’s than in any other magazine, with one exception. Active people, who want the new and want it now, *are known to be* advertising’s best friends.

F O R A C T I O N

MORE THAN 2,630,000 ACTIVE FAMILIES



2 5 0 P A R K A V E N U E N E W Y O R K : N E W Y O R K

conveyed a strong feeling of safety: "I'll stick close to him, Mrs. Hughes. I can dope out the Joe Carter type better than he can."

"He mustn't know—" started Judith, and Gene Lyons interrupted.

"You're right," said Gene. "You can trust me never to tell him how deeply in love you are."

MARTHA HASTINGS said, "This time, Judith—even your best friend is going to tell you."

"Tell me what?"

"That you look more than slightly moth-eaten."

Judith tried to laugh it off. "Oh, Grandma, what big eyes you have."

"The better to bite you with, my dear."

"All right. Go ahead and bite."

"I shall." Martha gazed sternly at her friend. "You're unhappy as hell."

"On your way, Sherlock. Would you mind explaining to Miss Watson here how you arrived at that conclusion?"

"Why not? First"—and Martha checked it off on one slender finger, "you changed our date from your lavish mansion to my humble abode, said abode being the place where you and I existed happily for lo, some moons. Conclusion: Homesickness."

"Maybe you're right."

"Second: You drift in here wearing a new suit, a new coat, a chic bonnet and a set smile. Your humor is forced and brittle and you've got that there light behind your eyes which proclaims that you aren't laughing. Conclusion: Misery."

"You make me feel naked."

"Third: You talk feverishly about everything that couldn't possibly interest you. Conclusion: You're avoiding the one subject that really does. Gal—you're discovered. You might as well break down and start weeping on my small but distinctly feminine bosom."

Judith said, "I suppose that's what I was homesick for, Martha . . . someone I could be natural with."

"In other words, you're in the mood to explode."

"Right."

"Then go ahead and say boom. I love the Fourth of July."

Judith did not look directly at her friend, and when she spoke, it was with embarrassment. She said, "It's Alan—"

"I never would have guessed it. I thought for sure it was either Jenkins or that mongrel mutt with the affectionate disposition. What's his name?"

"Nuit d'Amour."

"Such a misnomer for your house, Judith—or am I supposed to mind my own business?" Her voice softened, "What's Alan been doing?"

"Just exactly nothing."

"Completely over his smashup wounds, isn't he?"

"Yes. He's been okay and on the loose for a month now."

"SO I'VE heard," commented Martha. "I read the gossip columns occasionally." She looked closely at Judith. "This blond beauty been getting under your skin?"

"No. Believe me, she hasn't. And Alan has been sweet . . . sticking to all the rules. Flowers a couple of times a week, one duty evening at home out of each seven; and otherwise good times, lots of 'em, and no questions asked or answered. It's precisely what I suggested, and yet it isn't working out. To put it bluntly, I ain't gittin' nowhere, and I'm gittin' thar fast."

"And you'll continue not getting there," said Martha, "so long as you let things rock along this way. You've got a bad case of status quo."

"You say that in a very superior tone, Martha."

"I'm a very superior person. I hap-

pen to know that when you made this agreement with Alan you hadn't the slightest idea how deeply in love with him you were."

"All right—I'm in love with him." Judith made the statement with defiance, and a distinct sense of relief. "Which makes the present setup rather ghastly."

"So you come to a chronic virgin for advice! Am I surprised. Why, my dear young lady, I'm not even sure it's true about the bees and the flowers." She sat beside Judith and took her hand. "But if I were living in the same house with the guy I loved—and if we were legally united in the holy bonds of matrimony—I'd make a hell of an effort to find out."

"WHEN you're in love with a man," said Judith awkwardly, "it isn't easy—to make—advances. And even that isn't what I have been driving at, either."

"You mean that nice lad, Carter—the

shouldn't be talking so much, anyway."

Then Jim was in the room, looking bigger and broader and heartier than ever. He had visited Judith's home several times, but this seemed more natural . . . here in the little apartment she and Martha had shared. He took both her hands, kissed her lightly with a "Scusin' your wifehood," and then, "How's the fine lady from the big house?"

"From it is right, Jim. And I'm not fine. And I'm tired of being a lady."

"How you do go on." He grinned at Martha. "Alan been slugging her?"

"With kindness."

"What a dumbbell. What Judith needs is to be pushed around a bit."

"I also need a good brisk walk. How's about you two escorting me home—through the park—with the other squirrels?"

"You take the job, Jim."

"Aw, no . . ."

"Scram. I've got delicatessen to fix. And if you're not back in an hour I'll be all prepared with sharpened claws."



"Please continue, Mr. Frosham—I'm listening"

SYDNEY HOFF

one who tried to shove him into the hereafter?"

"No-o. Not entirely. Alan hasn't heard of or from Carter in the last month. Maybe the man is satisfied. It's just that the situation at home is becoming impossible. Maybe I'm right and maybe I'm wrong: maybe I'm smart and maybe I'm stupid—but I certainly am *not* happy."

"I see a crisis coming."

"Me, too," confessed Judith, "and I don't know what to do about it."

"Could you make him jealous?"

"Now you are being funny, Martha. Alan wouldn't know what it meant. And I have to play ball the same way. The smiling face . . . and all that sort of tommyrot."

"Us wimmin got a terrible fate. So what was the real purpose of your visit?"

"To put it into words, I suppose. To get home again. To act naturally—"

"And to absorb a bit of courage."

"As usual, you've hit the head on the nail."

"My grandpappy was a master carpenter. And if there's any further information you wish to pass out—"

Judith shook her head. "You've done your duty, Martha."

The doorbell sounded, and Martha jumped up. "Jim Terry," she said, "the right man at the wrong time."

"It's just as well," said Judith. "I

The first touch of spring was in the air, a highly gratifying but unseasonal warmth that was fooling even the shrubbery. And it was Jim who, with his usual discernment, touched on the subject that Judith had not mentioned. He looked down on the top of her head, and said gently, "Is it as bad as that?"

"Am I wearing my heart on my sleeve?"

"In your eyes, me gal."

JUDITH'S question was abrupt. "What kind of a man is Alan?"

"He's a right guy. All the way. But long ago, I discovered this: That no man can speak for another. He can only imagine what he'd do and what he'd feel if he were in the shoes of the other man. *Claro?*"

"More or less. And if you were . . . ?"

"No fair." He looked away suddenly, so that she could not see the hurt in his eyes. "I'm not."

"Meaning that it's my problem and I've got to meet it on my own?"

"Something like that."

"You're a helpful lad. If I were drowning, you'd probably hand me a drink of water."

He laughed and said, "Be yourself, Judith. You're really a very fortunate young lady."

"I know. But even very fortunate young ladies can get plenty worried."

"You talk very much as though de-

cisions were in the process of being reached."

"They are," she said, as they crossed Fifth Avenue against traffic and narrowly avoided being exterminated by a bus. "And one decision is to pack you home to Martha." She looked up then, and the smile she gave him was deeply affectionate. "Which reminds me," she said, "that a word to the wise is usually excellent . . . or aren't you wise?"

"You're incorrigible, Judith. Martha and I are doing fine."

"My fault. Sorry I butted in."

"Now, wait a minute. . . . You're edgy."

"Too much thinking. It's ruining me."

She stopped before the big house and held out her hand, "Won't you not come in?" she invited. "So sorry."

"By, Judith."

"By. And please don't think I'm a pig."

"Never in the world. I know you too well." She smiled down at her. "It's your own problem, honey. You've got to fight it out on your own lines—"

"If it takes all summer," she said. "As it most probably will."

Snitch's greeting was audible and violent. Alan appeared from the library. He said, "What's this magic power you have, Judith? Nuit d'Amour is shifting his affections."

"He's a discriminating pup."

HE CAME close, took her hand and touched it to his lips with a gesture that might have been both interesting and gallant, except for its touch of jocularity. "Been shopping?" he inquired politely.

"No. Spent the afternoon at the old apartment with Martha. Jim Terry walked me home."

"There's a good egg. And he's overboard about you."

He said it casually, indifferently. Then he asked, "What are you doing tonight, Judith?"

She was surprised. "Nothing. As usual."

"How about devoting yourself to me for a few hours?"

She said, "Sorry, Alan—but I simply don't enjoy the night spots. I suppose I'm hopelessly provincial."

"Nope. Provincial people love 'em. But that happens to be not the kind of invitation I'm extending."

"Well . . . ?"

"I'm suggesting that we have dinner at home, and spend the evening here."

"My little leopard. Changing his spots."

"Definitely." He put his finger under her chin and grinned down at her upturned face. "Don't be so serious."

"Sorry. I didn't mean to be."

"Cross your heart?"

She laughed with her lips. "Maybe I'm not a good liar after all. Martha just informed me that I was edgy."

"I'm frightened to death."

"You should be . . . so if you'd rather make it another evening . . ."

"Sometimes," he said rather sharply, "I'd like to shake you. And if I were smart, I'd postpone this party. But something's been eating on me, and I'm in a mood to palaver. So how's about it?"

"Fine. You actually sound formidable."

He said, "I am. But meanwhile there seems to be no good reason why our little domestic dinner shouldn't be fun—or is there?"

She made a quick gesture of apology. "You're right, Alan. And I'll try my best. But you have a strange light in your eyes."

"And stranger thoughts in my mind." He shoved her toward the stairs. "On your way, Damsel," he said. "I'll be waiting."

(To be continued next week)

Variable Star

Continued from page 22

No tennis champion has ever won a golf championship and no horse ever won a dog race, but this is a queer world these days and anything can happen.

Ellsworth Vines is now twenty-seven, looks twenty-one when you stand near him and about eighteen in his newspaper portraits. He has been playing golf for two years, six months of each year. For a couple of years before that he fiddled around with the game, as Fred Perry is fiddling today, a mere duffer, content with 85's, out more for the scenery and fresh air.

Two years ago, it entered his mind that perhaps he could master the art of getting a small, hard ball down a fairway and into a can. When he decides to go after a thing, he goes. And he is endowed and constituted by nature to fasten grimly to an idea, hang on, regard his goal fixedly and never quit trying.

He has the killer instinct in sports, which means he is playing against you to beat you, wipe you up with great gusto and show you no mercy. Tennis players found that out. Personally, he is as mild-mannered as a nun's hen, speaks softly and treats people with courtesy, kindness and a friendly grin. He is not upset by mishaps, doesn't blow up, and I am perfectly safe in stating that within four years E. Vines will mow the boys down and take over the crown.

Queerest of all, he loves to practice, with any club from putter to brassie, and not one expert in seven thousand actually loves to practice. Six months in the year, he plays professional tennis and the other six he devotes to golf. In that half a year, he plays and practices more golf than most amateurs get in two years. Under his present schedule, he appears at San Gabriel early in the morning and practices in utter solitude. He then takes a lesson from Harry Pressler, the San Gabriel pro. By that time it's noon, so he has a light lunch and plays eighteen holes with Boots Holloway, Freddy Clark and Waddy Hillis, and when the battle is over, if there remains a dab of daylight, he hastens out for a last bit of practice.

Up to the present moment, he has participated in two tournaments that I know of. He formally boarded the train

and went east to Pittsburgh to contend in the last national Amateur and was bounced out on his ear before he could take off his hat. He matched shots later on in the Lakeside Annual in Hollywood and was removed from the scene with smoothness and dispatch. That doesn't mean a thing. Some of the champions had fifteen years of golf under their belts before they began to click.

We will have to give Mr. Vines time, and if we don't he will take it anyhow, as he is a calm person. He is determined to shine among the stars, and has the mental equipment that makes for determination, so it might be any year from now on.

Too Much Right Arm

Harry Pressler believes he won't do it until after 1940, for he will still be playing tennis and tennis gums up a man's golf. When Vines is playing constantly or practicing tennis shots, his golf game suffers and he falls into a familiar fault. The old bean bobs up.

When he leaves his tennis courts and the admiring movie dames out in West Hollywood, he proceeds to the golf course and there, in the presence of Mentor Pressler, he keeps right on smacking the golf ball the way he has just quit hitting the tennis ball and that's bad. In tennis, the eye watches the ball arrive, the arm goes back, comes forward and so does the shoulder and likewise the head. Fine for tennis, but poison for golf.

It sometimes requires two weeks of nontennis before Elly can stand over a tee, whale the ball down the fairway and keep his chin motionless. I know stout fellows who have been trying to do the same thing for thirty-two years and still waggle like a loose blind in a typhoon.

His right arm and shoulder are strongly developed, due to whacking the tennis ball since childhood, and in golf you are instructed to hit with your left arm, so Mr. Vines will have to leave his right side on the courts, if he is going to be the All-America Boss.

Mr. Vines and self have steadily defeated sterling California teams, Vines

doing the work, while my part was largely advisory. In our most recent contest against Boots Holloway and Dr. C. W. Cook, another golfing gossamer like myself, we came through with this card and I trust you will look and see that I helped Elly on one portentous hole, No. 5.

San Gabriel Course

Par—out	4-5-4-5-3-4-4-4-3—36
Vines—out	4-4-3-4-4-3-5-5-2—34
Condon—out	5-6-5-6-3-5-5-5-4—44
Par—in	4-3-4-5-3-4-4-4-4—35
Vines—in	4-3-3-4-3-4-3-4-4—32
Condon—in	5-4-5-5-4-5-5-5-5—43

Here you have the tennis player batting out a 66, which is presentable golf anywhere between Pebble Beach and Oakmont, for our course record is 65 and the pros and amateurs have been shooting at it for thirty years. Five strokes under par would be considered masterful and unique, but Vines can do this casually. He has, on one occasion, equaled the course record. Elly hits a long, easy drive with a six-foot hook and his drive has that appearance of effortless ease that causes such envy and distress among beholders. He is a powerful fellow, with strong hands and wrists, long, gangling arms, long legs, and he can twist himself into a swing like a rubber band.

Harry Pressler thinks that Vines will keep on with his tennis a couple of years more; then, in the course of human events, his right arm will fall off on some tennis court and he'll quit.

About that time, Vines will be ready for his large week with the amateur championship contenders. In the meantime, I have a dependable golfing partner during six months of each annum and will take on Snead, Espinosa, Montague, Cooper, Smith, Goodman or any two golfers on any course in the entire world and wager suitable amounts on the outcome, the only stipulation being that one of these opponents shall play about like Henry McLemore of the United Press, C. B. Kelland of Long Island, P. H. Sims of New Jersey or any other good, third-class duffer.

At Dawning

Continued from page 21

"Does it matter whether she forgives you or not?"

"You bet. That woman owns a dress shop here. She's my bread and butter. Don't let's talk about that. Tell me some more about Hollywood, and also pardon me for asking."

Joe didn't mind talking about Hollywood, and now he told her at last how he was through, never going back. It would be a struggle, because in spite of all he had made he had only a few thousand dollars to show for it. He was trying now to sublet his house with the swimming pool. Nothing mattered, he explained, because now he was free to do the fine and satisfying work he was meant to do. He was going to start with Hippolytus, the first sex play ever written, he told Louise, which might give it a chance. But if it was tough going—

"I know all about that," said Joe, taking a bite of leathery steak, which had been the most expensive item on the menu. "I've been poor before. I was poor all my life until I went to Hollywood. Really poor!"

"Me, too," said Louise. "But it might be a hit, mightn't it? Look at the Mercury Theater, for instance. Not that I'm sure I'd gamble on it. You know. Just not always to have to take a room without a bath."

"Use mine," said Joe. "Maybe I will," said Louise. "The public one has rings around it."

"I really should be starting on rooms without baths myself," said Joe, "but this is a holiday. Louise, money with nothing else is just nothing. I know."

LOUISE looked at Joe earnestly, and it seemed to Joe sadly, and she did not notice his hand over hers.

"You're crazy, Joe Sheean," she said, "but it's none of my business. I guess you know what you ought to do. Only I saw some grand movies last winter—like Zola—and also some pretty bad plays."

They drove back to town after that in silence, but Louise was so close to Joe, and so sweet, that at last he put his arm about her shoulders and tried to think

of words to tell her of her sweetness. She didn't understand yet what he had been talking about, but she would. . . .

When they stopped in the plaza outside the Valencia, Joe kissed her, and then neither of them spoke for a long time. In the lobby he took her hand and held on to it.

"When will I see you tomorrow?" he asked.

"Dinner," said Louise. "When will I not see you, if I want that bath?"

"I'll go to the country club tomorrow until you're free; shoot a little golf, maybe. Any time for the bath. I'll tell them at the desk. Good night, dear."

"Good night, Joe," said Louise.

He went to bed at once, very tired, his emotions aching like unused muscles. Slipping into the sweet moment between sleep and waking, he was suddenly warm with love. Louise, I'll marry you—why not?—and we'll face the future together.

When he told the clerk next day about Miss Cadman and the bath, the clerk gave him a look—a cross between a wink



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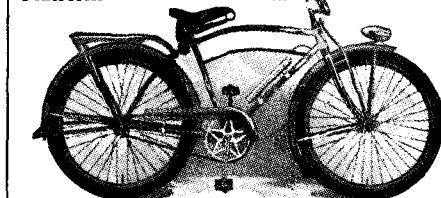


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and a leer—that infuriated Joe. He did not enjoy golf, or his lunch at the club; he left early and drove back to town, where he found all the shops barred for the noonday siesta. He went up to his room, and heard, as he opened the door, the sound of water running from the shower. His heart hurt suddenly with unaccustomed joy.

"Louise!" he called.

The water was turned off, and a minute later Louise came out wrapped in his big blue bathrobe.

"Hello," she said. "I'm awfully sorry—I didn't think you'd be back so soon."

"Louise!" Joe said again, and she walked into his arms, and they clung to each other. "I was lonesome for you."

"Darling Joe," whispered Louise.

"We're going to get married," said Joe. "I'm going to marry you, and get back to work, and if it's a struggle—Well, two people can face reality together. What's wrong, Louise?"

She moved to a chair and sat down.

"Listen," she said. "I thought you'd be swell to marry until you told me about leaving Hollywood. You're maybe—well, romantic, and I'm not." She began to cry. "And, damn it, then I had to fall in love with you. Well, of course I'm going to marry you, but I don't want to. We probably won't get along one bit."

LOUISE, thought Joe, terribly happy, was not only a darling, she was a sport. She asked him just once if he wouldn't consider going back to Hollywood, and was told at some length why he could never go back and still save his soul; and then she began to plan their future life with all good grace, wiping away her tears with the sleeve of his bathrobe. They would take a place in one of those remodeled houses and she would go on working.

"I don't want you to go on working, darling," said Joe. "It shouldn't be as bad as that. And you can't go away from me ever."

"Not ever," said Louise. "Not ever." She was so generous and sweet, blue eyes shining, sitting in his room, in his blue bathrobe, that Joe ordered her abruptly to get dressed at once while he waited for her in the lobby.

"You're pretty nice, you know it, darling," said Louise. "Go on, beat it. I've lost my head enough. I'll have to work this afternoon. Let's go to the country for dinner. I know a place."

Joe went to the bar, ordered a drink, and discovered that he did not need it. The afternoon went by in a dream of heat. Joe avoided his American friends and went prowling about the city.

Later Louise and Joe drove into the country, talking, sometimes both at once, about the past they had not shared, and about the future when they would be together. School—my ma—first jobs—no jobs—my dad—

The road ran down to the bank of a broad, shallow river and began again on the opposite bank. Joe stopped the car.

"What do we do now?" he said.

"We ford the river," said Louise.

"With my luck," said Joe, "we'll get stuck."

But the car moved slowly through the muddy water, over the stones of the ford, and rolled safely out to the road.

"It couldn't be that I've changed your luck, could it, dear," said Louise.

Joe laughed.

"You are also smart," he said, "which is more than anyone has a right to expect."

They dined in a garden full of green plants and vines and huge brilliant flowers. Joe kissed Louise in front of all the Central Americans, and ordered champagne to celebrate their engagement.

"And my escape from glamor," said Joe.

Louise said she thought maybe the

champagne was a little too expensive, and with each glass she thought of new and sensible plans for the future.

"If you go to those big public markets," she said, "everything's much cheaper and probably just as good. You pull off a few extra leaves of lettuce if they're wilted, and things like that."

Joe changed the subject and had another glass of wine. Wilted lettuce! He looked at Louise and she was cool and lovely in a large hat and white linen dress.

"Want to hear some more, darling?" she said. She winked at him. "Shall I tell you about the walk-up apartments we'll live in while you're saving your soul? Never mind, sweet. I do love you; I don't know—I just can't help it."

"Do you want to help it?" said Joe, and kissed her again.

When they started to drive back to town, along the road by the sea, Joe stopped the car a moment so that they could look out at the world. They held hands like good and happy children.

They drove toward the ford, not talking, with Louise close to Joe. This time he did not stop when he came to the stream; Louise, warm and sweet, sat beside him with her head against his

Instead, Joe told her again what a terrible time he had had in Hollywood, and thought about what a terrible time he was having here.

"Look!" said Louise, interrupting him after a while. "Something's coming along." She peered into the darkness.

"It's an oxcart. Thank goodness!"

"Buenas noches, señor," said the peasant in the creaking cart.

LOUISE explained to the peasant that they were stuck, and Joe handed over a good many pesos. The oxen were attached to the car and at last they heaved it out of the mud and along the ford to the farther bank. Then the car wouldn't start. After a while Joe gave up. The oxen pulled the car to a tumbledown hut, and the peasant took off his sombrero and invited them to enter.

"He's asking us to stay here tonight," said Louise.

"Lord!" said Joe, getting out after Louise and following her uncomfortably on his wet, tired feet.

The hut was made of sticks plastered with mud. Two wooden frames with canvas stretched across them stood at the side; a woman slept on one, and three children slept on the other. There

Here's reality. You've been looking for it, remember? Champagne and swimming pools!"

"I've told you I'm giving that up," said Joe. "And if it's all the same to you, I'd just as soon fight without an audience."

"You're giving *what* up?" said Louise. "You can do just as good work in Hollywood as anywhere else. And don't tell me I don't understand. I do understand. You don't."

The peasants began to murmur softly in Spanish, and the woman took Louise's hand and patted it.

"You might like to apologize to your hosts," Louise said. "They're saying they're sorry you didn't like their food. And if you'd like to know, I like their food but I don't like you. You go on back and produce Hippolytus, the first sex play ever written, and I'll go back to my walk-up. I like reality, and especially I like it in the movies."

Joe stalked out of the hut, and began to tinker with the car, kicking it occasionally to help himself feel better. By accident he fixed it, for it began to run. Louise came out at the sound, and climbed into the car without a word.

It was dawn when they drove away from the hut, with the peasants and their children waving to them.

Joe glanced at Louise; her white dress was crushed and soiled, her hair in wisps trailed across her cheeks, there were blue shadows under her eyes. She had been outrageously rude and she did not understand his problems at all. She bid him a chilly good night inside the hotel, and went up the stairs out of sight.

JOE fell down on his bed and prepared to sleep. But he could not sleep. He should have eaten the tortilla, no matter what, and maybe At Dawning was not the best picture Louise had ever seen—Louise was right, and that was what he could not forgive. He would never forgive her, but he would go straight back to Hollywood, and when she saw his new pictures she would know—what? Well, that he loved her. He jumped up. All the time he was packing to catch the early morning plane, he saw Louise lonely and sad in a movie house, watching one of his great pictures—better and truer than Zola, say—and then she would know and be sorry.

He sat at last in the silver plane, waiting for it to start, staring out at the dawn, gold, rose and blue over the mountains. He felt at once foolish and self-righteous; he was full of bloom and resolve, and regret for Louise and shame for the boor he had been.

The motor turned over, a great roar filled the plane, and the grass of the field was blown flat. Suddenly the steward ran down the aisle and opened the door. Joe looked around and saw Louise climb on. She started when she saw him, and then shouted, as she sat down in the seat opposite him:

"I'm running away from you. Why are you here?"

"I'm going back to Hollywood," shouted Joe. "Are you sorry for what you said?"

"No!" shouted Louise. "I didn't say half enough."

"You were right," shouted Joe, "but I'll never admit it to you. Do you love me?"

"Yes!" shouted Louise.

Joe stood up, and noticed in passing that he had not fastened his seat belt and took it for a good omen. The plane rose and soared, and shot off toward the morning sky. Joe sat on the arm of Louise's chair and kissed her.

"They can see," she whispered, pointing to the passengers.

"So okay, they can see," whispered Joe. "So can I. You have blue eyes. You're a fresh kid. You're—different."



shoulder. Happiness made him sure of himself, and he took off into the water without even slowing down. Halfway across, the wheels slipped from the stones, the car settled and stopped, wheels churning in the deep mud. Joe struggled for a moment, looked at the water sliding by over the running board, and turned off the ignition.

"That luck of yours didn't last too long," he said. "What do we do now?"

"I guess we wait," said Louise. "I'm awfully sorry, dear. Maybe you were going a speck too fast for the ford."

"I told you when we started this might happen," said Joe. "Just what do we wait for?"

"Peasants. With oxen."

THEY looked out over the gleaming river moving sluggishly past the car. "If you take the long view," said Joe, "this doesn't amount to anything." No view could have been shorter than his; he was remarkably irritated. Suddenly he exclaimed, "Hell!" and lifted one of his shoes. Water was leaking under the doors of the car.

"My feet are wet, too," said Louise. "Never mind, darling, someone's sure to come. Tell me about Hippolytus."

"Hippolytus?"

"The play you're going to direct."

was a crude altar in the corner, with a canopy of colored tissue paper over it. The woman woke, and stared at them with sleepy eyes. Then she smiled and rose at once, pointing to the bed. Louise sat down on it.

"Sit down," she said sharply to Joe. "They're asking us to stay here tonight."

Joe sat gingerly on the edge of the cot. He watched the smallest baby wake and sit up; the baby was naked, and his arms were spindly and his stomach round and big.

"Rickets," said Louise. "Look at his stomach. Come here, sweet kid."

But the baby looked away at his mother, bringing thick tortillas spread with beans to Joe and Louise. Joe took his tortilla and held it away from him.

"Eat it," said Louise, and the peasants smiled. Joe took a bite and walked rapidly out of the hut. He threw the tortilla away in the darkness, and waited a while before he came back. A few minutes later a thin sad dog came back with the tortilla and ate it. Everyone watched him eat.

"You're disgusting!" said Louise. "They've done everything they can for us, and you've insulted them."

"Nonsense," said Joe, feeling guilty.

"Nonsense, nothing!" said Louise, standing up. "You and your reality!"

Christmas Feast

Continued from page 9

the bank. Allen knew Lin, of course; everyone knew Lin. Allen had stopped his car in the shadow of the great oaks, and the Kimpers had walked out of hiding.

George's part had been to carry the murderers and the decoy safely to the city junction, seventy miles away. But George had never had a chance to play his role of confederate. Sheriff Lane, chancing to come along with a deputy, had unexpectedly arrived at the scene, and before Allen Peters' body had fairly slumped to the floor of his car George's own body was full of bullets and the other three were being held prisoner in the Buckholt car.

Mollie Kiernan had lived and relieved every moment of it a thousand times. But not all the evidence in court had told her everything. She must have it all.

"All Jarge was goin' to do was drive ye to the place an' thin take him on to the city?" she would ask casually.

"In Buckholt's car," he would reply.

SHE would brood over the words. She was a silent woman, unimaginative except where her heart was concerned, but the very fibers of her heart were involved in this. She could go back fifteen years and hear the voice of Earl Kimper, lounging about Foster's Garage on a summer morning, speaking carelessly to George:

"Want to bring that big car up to the Bend some day next week and meet me and Bud? Fill her up with gas, kid, and there'll be fifty bucks in it for you."

George would not have thought it out. George might have been as innocent as a baby. But no, Mollie Kiernan's honesty had to stop her there. Any boy who had anything to do with the Kimpers wasn't entirely innocent. They'd had bad records long before this. George must have known something was wrong.

"It was the sheriff shot him?" She knew it was.

"Yes'm. He wasn't shootin' at George, specially. He was just shootin' at anybody, as he come up."

"The Kimpers didn't fire back?"

"They was runnin' the two cars into the bushes—their car and Peters'. Their guns was layin' on the ground. I was with George in Buckholt's car, and

when they shot him he slumped over against me."

"He didn't die right off?" She knew the answer to that, too.

"In about five minutes, I guess."

Maybe he had time for a prayer, she thought.

The bitter December days went by; Lin stayed on. Christmas week came in with deceptive blue skies and soft airs, and still Lin was moving silently about the place, remembering to fill the cat's saucer with milk, remembering to gather bones and scraps from meals for the dog.

Her bitterest enemy, and yet Mollie found his presence strangely healing, strangely curative. Simple charity, simple mothering, had drawn the sting from her grief.

She fixed her extra bedroom for him; she gave him George's clothing, piece by piece. But she never spoke as if she expected him to stay, although his eyes, the tones of his voice, the abject quick eagerness with which he did whatever he could do to help her, all repeated the question over and over.

At first Mollie did not herself know the answer. She had been possessed of but one thought for many weary years. She had longed, thirsted, strained toward one glimpse more of George, one sound of his voice, one touch of his clean-shaven hard young cheek against her own.

"Give me a sign from him!" she had pleaded, on her knees. "Let me have one look at him an' see he smilin' or not. Don't l'ave me hungry and sorrowin' all me days for the sound of him teasin' me whin I'd be sayin' me prayers on him nights, or makin' him potato cakes on a Saturday mornin'. Jarge, Jarge, wherever ye are, dear'r, cud ye not come back an' tell Mamma that whatever ye done it's forgiven ye, an' someday I'm goin' to find ye again?"

Silence, darkness had been the only answer until now. But might this be the answer; this chance to overwhelm the man with the kindness, the shelter, the mothering he needed so pitifully now?

The thought began to excite her as nothing had excited her for many a year. To have him here in George's place, this poor feeble wreck. To feed him, bring

him back to health and some sort of strength again. To face the village quietly; Lin Sallet had been mixed up with that Kimper murder with George Kiernan, and wasn't it Mrs. Kiernan of all people in the world who had taken the poor fellow in and was doing for him! She had hardly heard the voices of neighbors for years, of priest or nuns. But if Father Molloy did stop her for a moment on the church steps some morning to say in his kind old way: "You are doing a very good piece of work, Mrs. Kiernan"; yes, she could bear that. If Mother Ligouri smiled at her: "Well done, Mollie! That's going to bring you Our Lord's own blessing," that would break the ice of years more quickly than anything else.

And besides that, she liked him. He was so silent, so helpful, so anxious to be useful; he was company even when the two let an hour go by, and another hour, and did not exchange a single word. She could not give ten dollars to this charity or that, nor join in the Improvement Club, nor visit the prisons. But she could do this. She could forgive her enemy and do good to him.

Life had not been what, in her simple philosophy, she had thought it would be. Wifehood had not been, with poor Dan slipping down under a hay cart and being crushed beneath the great wheels three days before George had been born. Motherhood had not been; fierce joy and pride mingled with fear for those brief eighteen years; then fear borne down under the shame and pain that forever now spelled motherhood for her.

And this new responsibility had not been part of any plan Mollie had ever formulated in her mind for herself. Take in an ex-convict who had ruined her one son? Why, many of the safe happy wives in the village would not have dared house him for a night, much less take him into the loneliest cabin on the mountain!

BUT Mollie dared do it, and she felt the first stir of anything like happiness that she had known since George's death as the conviction slowly came to her that this was her destiny now. She would tell him, she thought, on Christmas morning; her pulses warmed at the thought that she could give him a Christmas present worth giving.

"Do you ever make potato cakes for breakfast any more?" he asked her one night. She looked at him sharply.

"What makes ye think of that?"

"I was thinkin' how good they was."

"Did ye ever taste them?" she asked, surprised.

"I was at your house one night, 'member?" he said. "I run away from the home, and Bates come after me, an' ast you could I stay here one night with George becuz he had to chase up another feller on toward Benders."

She remembered. The panting home superintendent, angry, red-faced, the wretched, frightened little runaway gripped tight in his big hand; her cottage, at the edge of town, with roses over the kitchen door, and chickens picking placidly in the yard. George's velocipede, George's dog, George's self had been there; George had been capering about under the garden sprinkler in red bathing trunks; he had stared with deep curiosity at the institution child.

"Mrs. Kiernan!" the superintendent had shouted, "could you keep this kid until afternoon? I've got to get over to Benders, and get there fast. There's another one of them there."

"He'll not run out on me?" she had asked, nodding an affirmative.



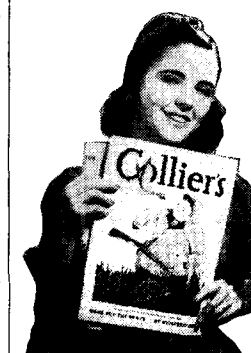
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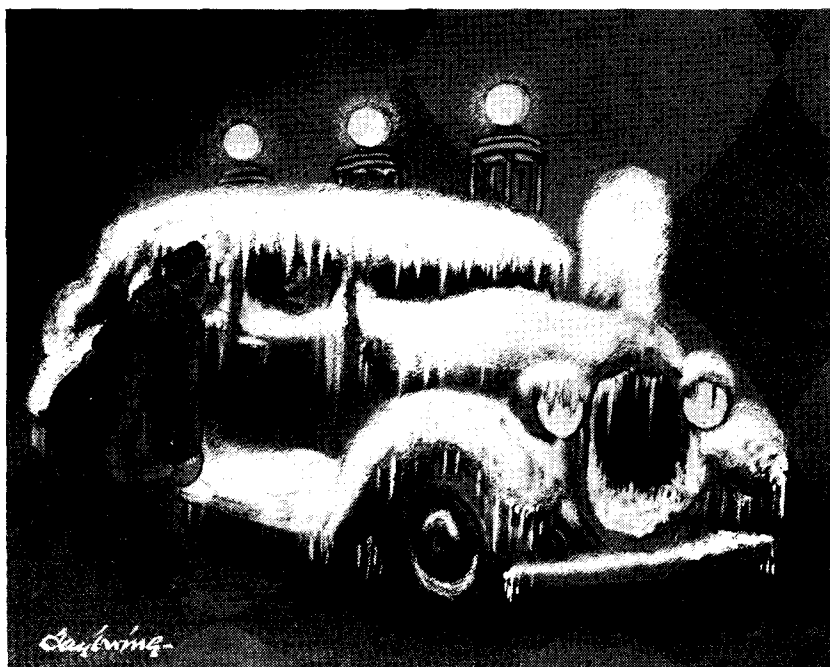
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"Gimme ten cents' worth of that no-freeze stuff"

JAY IRVING

"No, that feller's had enough running!" the man had grimly shouted back. So Lin Sallet had spent the day with George, who had been pleased enough to find an unexpected companion, and had spent the night, too, for the superintendent's quest had proved to be unexpectedly long.

But until this moment she had never identified that forlorn runaway with Lin Sallet.

The mention of potato cakes had stabbed her deep tonight. But something else had stabbed her too. The thought that the widowed prosperous mother of one happy, safe little boy had let another crying little fellow be taken back to the orphanage, perhaps to be punished severely for running away and inciting another child to run away. What else could they do but punish him, make him cry and break his spirit? They could not encourage runaways.

She had let him go, and it seemed to her now that she remembered his being pale and tearful and silent when he had gone. Maybe his life would have been different, poor little Lin Sallet, if she had put out a motherly arm then and said, "Leave him to me. I'll try him for a while. Judge Kelly was Dan Kiernan's cousin; he'll arrange the whole business. Let the child stay here with George!"

She had not said it.

Mollie Kiernan was not capable of any deep analysis of the problems with which life presented her. But she was thinking tonight with her wrinkled brow doubly wrinkled and her shabby old shoes tucked under her as she crouched in her chair by the fire.

"Yure mamma had to put ye in an orphanage, did she thin?"

"My father deserted her. He never helped her none. She worked at the box factory and she had her father to take care of."

THE box factory. "Only tin minutes' walk from me little place," Mollie said to herself. "She cud've come over nights to see him, havin' supper in the yar'd wit' Jarge."

Too late. Too late now for that.

"Ye want to yure mamma whin ye—whin ye—?"

"When I got out. A feller in Stockton told me she was workin' in the San Jose packin' plant. I went down there and found her. So she got me a job and we had a little place together."

"An' how long was that, Lin?"

"Til she died. It was nine years I worked there. She said—my mother said—they was the only happy years of her life. We had an old car an' we'd go over to the beach, an' seemed like I never wanted to see nobody else, nor she didn't either. I'd sort of feel they might know about Peters, an' me bein' in prison, an' she used to work so hard she liked to rest. But then she died, and I hurt my leg, and I couldn't work in the plant no more becuz it was so hot. So I come up here to see could I get work in the mountains somewhere."

There was a silence. The bright old eyes continued to regard him.

"Tomorrow's Christmas Eve," Mollie Kiernan said suddenly.

"Yes'm; I know."

"I want to make ye a Christmas present an' ask ye a Christmas favor, Lin," the woman said.

"I'll do anything in God's world ye ask me," the man answered, his voice suddenly hoarse, "but you've done enough for me. I'll never forget it the longest day I live."

"I want ye to stay here," she said suddenly. "Me hear't's been like a rock for fifteen years. There was days—there was weeks whin I cudden't cry for him, I cudden't look at his pitcher. An' whin I'd think of the Kimper boys, or of you, it wud seem like somethin' was goin' to bust inside me."

"Since ye come here," Mollie went on, after a moment of complete silence, "I'm loosed up, like. It's not har'd no more. It's like God Himself showed me that we're all poor creatures, we're all weak an' wrong, we've to help each other an' not thry for revenge an' hate. I hope—as He hear's me!—that He's forgive' the Kimpers this long time, an' that they're doin' betther, wheriver they may be. Sure their papa was poor Willy Kimper that was as crazy as a loon, and their mamma wint wit' twinty men after he run out on her. They was made the way they was, the poor souls, it was no ch'ice of theirs."

"MY BOY died," she presently recommenced, as he did not speak, "but yure mamma had her boy wit' her for all thim years. An' maybe it was right she should, poor ger'l, that'd had such a bad time of it. I'd me a good home an'

might be another trial, an' that would have killed Ma. She was so happy, cookin' for me an' havin' me to talk to! But now Ma's dead an' can't be hurt, an' I could take the rap again if I had to."

"George—here's the thing, Mrs. Kiernan. George wasn't in that, you know. George was just runnin' round in Buckholt's car, like he used to like to do, just for the fun of it, an' Earl Kimper seen him comin' along the road toward the Bend, an' he says to Bud an' me, 'Here's someone that can git us out of this!' There was somethin' the matter with their car, an' they knew they could never make the city, an' they had been cussin' somethin' terrible until George come along. Then Earl stepped out with a gun an' stopped him, an' George put up his hands. He didn't have nothin' to do with killin' Peters. He looked from one of us to the other like he was terribly surprised an' he says, 'For God's

ramento. It won't hurt us to have him in it.'"

Mollie spoke to herself in a whisper, looking into the fire.

"Oh, if I cud but belave him!"

"I knew I couldn't hurt him. I never thought of you," Lin said.

"You hur't him that everyone thought he done it," Mollie said. But even as she said it she felt that the soreness and fever had gone mysteriously from the old wound. For years and years ice had locked them tight in her broken, troubled, frozen spirit. Now, the ice warmed and melted.

"If he done you and yure mamma a good tur'n—" she began slowly. That would be like George, in his very dying to give this less fortunate boy something. To give his lonely mother nine precious years of him; her little boy, wounded and frightened, hers to mother and shelter again! Her mind and soul and body rocked together.

But the doubts came back.

"Ye'd tell me he never done it that ye might comfort me," she said slowly.

"George talked to me," Lin said suddenly. "I'll tell Potter all about it if you want me to!"

"Potter's dead," she said wearily.

"They're all dead—that knew his father, that cared what he done! Ye'll tell nobody. If he cud come back he'd want it that way, that they'd think he got you into it, and it was two boys together that was in it! I'd not spoil the ser'vice he done ye. Maybe, but for him, they'd have sint ye to the gallows wit' poor Earl and Bud, God rist thim. He talked to ye? He said goodby to ye?"

"HE SAYS, 'Ain't this a funny break, Lin? This'll kill Ma,'" Lin quoted. "He says, 'This'll be the finish for both our mothers!' Afterward," Linn said, "that made me remember my mother. He says, 'I oughtn't never have touched Mr. Kane Buckholt's car, but I hadn't never driven an eight-cylinder. He went out of town today an' I was cleanin' it an' I thought I'd give it a run.'"

"You'd not make this up to comfort me," she whispered.

"No, ma'am. He says, 'Lin, that's blood, maybe they got me, maybe I'm dyin','" the boy reported.

His mother whispered something sharply, a half-conscious prayer.

"Then he says, 'We'd ought to pray, Lin,' but I didn't know any prayers."

"I think if I belaved ye," she said in a suffocated voice, "me hear't wud go out the top of me head! What else, thin? What else?"

"I was scared—his head sort of fell against me. I yelled to Earl that he was hurt bad, an' he looked at me, George did, an' just at the end, before he fell back on me, he says, 'Tell Ma I knew I oughtn't to have done it. Tell her I'll be waitin' with Saint Peter an' we'll ask him to breakfast!'"

Their old joke! It caught her body like the grip of an electric battery; she was on her feet, she was pacing the dim, smoke-scented room distractedly. Oh, George, George, to have you speak to me again after all these years! Oh, my son, my son, have you come back to me, mischievous and unwise, but not cruel, not criminal, mine again forever and forever!

She stopped behind Lin's chair, grasped his temples with both her bony, hard-worked hands.

"Oh, what have ye given me, dear'r? What have ye given me? Oh, why wasn't I grateful whin He thried me for more than I cud bear'r? Why didn't I see? Why didn't I see?"

Presently, tears streaming down her face, she sank into a chair. And to his amazement Lin saw that she was laughing.

"He'd always say that," she whispered, half to herself. "Sure, he'd al-



"I always put a little soap on the trap to keep Kennesaw away from the bait"

REAMER KELLER

a good man an' me boy, an' who knows but Jarge had time for a little prayer at the bitter ind that will bring him back safe to me whin I go on to him and Dan?"

Tears were streaming down her face. She was looking into the fire, talking half to herself.

"So my Christmas gift to ye is that ye'll stay here an' be a son to me, Lin," she could presently tell him unsteadily, "an' what I ask ye is that for yure mamma's sake an' mine ye'll make a man of yureself, an' go down to chur'ch wit' me Sundays, an' let thim all see that there's no bitterness between the two of us. There's nothin' wud bring us nearer to God than that, that we'd forgive each other an' was fri'nds."

Seated in a low chair opposite her, he had put his elbows on his knees now, and pressed his thin hands against his face. She saw the bright tears drip down, and that he could not speak.

"I've a Christmas gift I want to make you, Mrs. Kiernan," he said presently, in a steady, quiet voice. He did not look at her. He knotted his hands and looked into the fire. "It's—comin' to you," he went on. "I'd ought to have told you long ago, back there at the time of the trial. But I was scared of Distric' Attorney Potter, an' I'm scared of him now. When the sher'ff once gets his hands on you it's—good night. I've always thought that if I told you there

sake, Mr. Kimper, I haven't got a cent with me!" an' Earl says, 'We won't hurt you, Kiernan, we want you to drive that car to the city for us.'

"But George looked over an' he seen Bud goin' through Peters' pockets an' the way Peters was layin' over sideways an' he says, 'God help us all, what are they doin'?' an' he yelled, 'Rush 'em, Lin! You an' I can take 'em on!' So Bud whirled and covered me, an' Earl shot an' hit George, an' George sort of curled down against the seat. I run to him—I was scared an' I held up his head an' says, 'Now look what you done!' an' I begun to cry, an' just then the sher'ff come up an' looked at George an' says, 'He's done for, an' you stay pretty quiet, Sallet!' an' he covered the Kimpers an' got the others an' took us into town, and took George to the morgue."

"BUT in coort ye said Jarge was in it," the woman, watching him fixedly, reminded him. She was breathing fast and light, one hand on her heart.

"Becuz I thought if I said George got me into it they'd let me off easier! I thought George was dead an' he wouldn't care, becuz he'd always give you anything he had—he didn't care. An' Kimper told me to, Earl Kimper did. Before the deputies come up he says, 'Keep Kiernan in this. His father was coroner here, they was goin' to send him to Sac-

ways have his joke that we'd ask Saint Pether to breakfast! But d'ye think he'd say that if there was anythin' like mur'r-der on his soul? No, it wasn't there at all! All he done was steal a ride in Buckholt's car'r, an' look what Buckholt's own son did, this year's past? They'd forgive him that—they'd not hold it against ye, Jarge, that ye had no sense, an' you but eighteen!"

Her musing fell into undertones; she seemed unconscious of Lin's presence, and he watched her anxiously, afraid that she might faint. But when he said good night to her and slipped away to bed she answered him gently enough. She was rocking a little now, in a comfortable fireside fashion that he had not seen before, she was murmuring a confusion of words that began and ended nowhere.

When he had gone, and she had heard his bed creak as he got into it, she slipped to her knees, and stretched her arms across the seat of her chair, her eyes on the faded rose and gray of the fire. For a long time she knelt so, not consciously praying, but not using any one of the hundred familiar formulas, with every word a prayer.

FORLORN old figure that she was, kneeling in the dim light with her gnarled, water-swollen old hands knotted before her, yet her faded old eyes had the power tonight to look straight through the darkened rough walls of the cabin, to look out past the black winter woods that were powdered delicately with snow, to see something beyond it all, some new vision of radiance and happiness ineffable to which her thoughts never had dared rise for all these weary years. He was safe, the child for whose safety she would have died a thousand deaths.

"Oh, my God, Ye done it!" she breathed, her words torn so deeply from her heart that they were half audible in the quiet room. "I didn't know it cud be done, but Ye did it for me! Ye give him back to me—"

Given back purified; given back to be forever her own boy who might do a reckless thing and a foolish thing like borrowing Mr. Kane Buckholt's big car without permission, but who would

never do a wicked one! Remembering his mother in the very last shocked moment of his beautiful young life, when the blood was already draining from his brave heart!

"Lin cud 'a' lied to me," she said, "an' indade I'd not put it past him. 'Twud be a kind lie that'd save a mother from breakin' her hear't. But that wasn't a lie! Sure he never cud make it up that Jarge said that, that about Saint Pether an' the breakfast!"

"Oh, Jarge, me darlin', me baby that I taught to walk an' put in the high chair wit' the little bib under yure chin, are ye waitin' for Mamma, darlin'? Are we goin' to have breakfast wit' Saint Pether an' give him potato cakes? Deary, it's nothin' for me to wait that little while, to feel ye agin, an' smell the smell of yure black hair an' the sunburn on yure face! Well, Mamma knows now that ye never done anything wrong, dear'r; how wud ye, kind an' good to the very dogs an' cats that ye always were, how wud ye ever connive wit' thim Kimpers to hur't an old man? Of coorse ye'd not, not the longest day ye'd live! . . ."

She rose from her knees, bewildered with the intensity of prayer. The shabby, shadowy room was very still in the hush of winter midnight. No breeze stirred tonight. When Mollie Kiernan went to the door she looked out upon a world utterly motionless under a winter moon. Snow lay like powder everywhere. She looked up at the spangled sky.

"Truly, His way are not our ways," she said aloud, "nor His thoughts our thoughts! He breaks yure hear't, an' thin long afther He shows ye that ye've climbed up higher, an' that's the way ye'd have it be, afther all!"

She shut the door, turned back into the kitchen. It was after midnight; the new day would be Christmas Eve. Mollie stood meditating for a moment, then she went to the pantry.

"I disremember did I start thim wit' yeast or bakin' powdther," she mused aloud. "I've me little bowl of mashed potatoes here; did I put the flour in wit' thim or did I mix it wit' the milk fir'st? It'll all come back to me—it'll seem like Christmas Eve again wit' potato cakes for breakfast!"



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"For money to help pay our after-Christmas bills, with plenty left to provide for new clothes and to fix up our home." Is this your inner-self speaking and does it sound impossible to you when you realize the state of your finances?

HERE is some thrilling news for you! I can make those plans come true—and right away, too! Thousands of girls and women all over the country are earning extra dollars of their own here in the Pin Money Club, a money-making department of this great magazine.

Among the thousands of letters in my mail bag I found this delightful one from a New York state member. *She writes—*

"This is to acknowledge the very lovely mystery gift—the brooch—you sent to me. It is a very brilliant one and I will always prize it very highly among my choicest possessions."

From a mother living down south in Louisiana—

"How very proud I am of the lovely handbag and check which just arrived. Would you be interested to know that I am spending the check—all of it—on material for new dresses for myself? I shall think gratefully of you whenever I wear them."

Earned \$17 in a Week

"Things were looking pretty dark for us. My daughter who is a junior in High School and a member of the Prom committee had to have a formal evening gown. Her father groaned. He had spent our last cent and even some we had borrowed to pay taxes and the installment on our farm. I told them all not to worry. I earned \$17 in a week in the Pin Money Club—enough to buy a glorious new gown and gold sandals for her. Some of the junior girls had to miss the big party because of the lack of suitable clothes—my daughter feels so grateful that she did not have to miss it too."

From Utah came this letter. It was, you see, from a brave mother who has helped out in many a "pinch" throughout the past years since she joined the Pin Money Club.



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IMAGINE the pride of the mothers who can bring pleasant surprises to their children. The satisfaction it gives the wife who can help out when her husband is having a hard time.

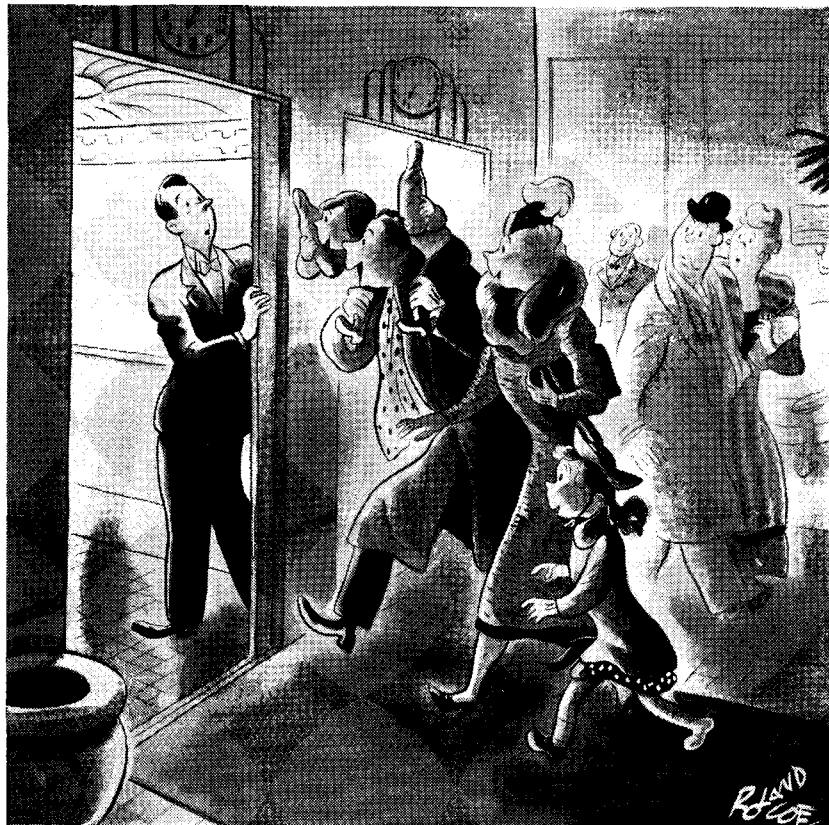
An Iowa member says: "My earnings amounted to \$31.30 and helped to buy coal and groceries."

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Margaret Clarke

Secretary, Pin Money Club
Collier's, The National Weekly
Department 76
250 Park Avenue New York City



"Over the river and through the woods, to Grand-mother's house we go . . . TENTH FLOOR, PLEASE!"

ROLAND COE

East Wind Blows in the Valley

Continued from page 15

po' hillsides dat's so no'count de tax man passes hit by. But I keeps my promise."

"Amen, Mister Mack. God will change conditions," stated the Widow Duck. "Be not disencouraged."

The winter months dragged on. On days when it was dry enough to plow, Mister Mack never had to be told; he always came to the barn before sunup, along with the other workers. Giles, perhaps consciously, assigned him to the lightest job available, but if there was no light work Mister Mack took his place beside the younger and stronger men, and he never complained.

Then, one clear, chilly morning, Mister Mack gave Giles the surprise of his life. Not that Mister Mack undertook to dramatize the event. It came about naturally, and before the foreman knew it he had acquiesced in the plan.

It was the day that Dave did not show up for work at the barn. Dave and Sugar were Mister Mack's nearest neighbors. They lived about halfway between the "grudge" ditch and the barn, and it was Dave's turn to plow the man-killing team of Hawk, Eagle and Lightning. Mister Mack caught the team.

"Dave," he explained, "is ailin'. He my neighbor, so I'm plowin' in his turn."

"Hunh?" snorted Giles. "Dave can't ail on his day to plow dat team. He don't plow hit but one day outn five—"

"Dave," Mister Mack stated, "got pizened. He all swole up and sick."

"Pizened!" The foreman was raging. "He pizened hisse'f jest to git sick! I'm gonter make him plow dat team—"

"Nope," said Mister Mack. "His woman pizened him. She hyared Dave was gittin' around some, so she put some witchin' powders in his vittles to witch his love back, and hit pizened him."

That was different, and Giles calmed down. A man couldn't help what his wife did to him. "Well, git goin', ev'ybody!" he ordered. "Henry, you git de dranchin' bottle and a pint er dem saltses, and go down and dranch dat pizen outn Dave. And ev'ybody else level down."

MISTER MACK plowed the big team all day long. Giles was too busy to pay much attention, but he noticed, once or twice that the old man had a quiet way with the fast-stepping team, and the mules themselves seemed to understand. When night came, Mister Mack unharnessed and turned his team into the lot. He said nothing but he looked much older, Giles thought.

When the winter plowing was completed and the crop planted, the big fields were subdivided and each cropper given a small patch for which he was responsible. Mister Mack and Pauline drew nine acres near their cabin, and their field adjoined the land allotted to Dave and Sugar.

Mister Mack never missed a single day's work, but soon after the day he had plowed the three big mules to the middle splitter everybody noticed that his steps were shorter and less certain, and that his tall, straight body was bent as if he were toting a heavy burden.

Most of the people blamed Mister Mack's change on the big mules. "Dem mules," they said, "is powerful to make any man agity and 'cropit befo' his time. Hit's a shame!"

But there are always a few people who have forked tongues. They said: "Mules? Hunh! Hit's a two-laigged mule got old Mister Mack all bunt over. A big black two-laigged mule about de size er Dave been gittin' in de wrong stall."

The Widow Duck heard the gossip,

and she hated that kind of talk. She went directly to the foreman.

"Giles," she told him, "I don't know efn hit's any trufe in dis lyin' tawk about Dave and Mister Mack, and I don't keer. But you had ought to stop hit, one way or de yuther. Efn hit is de trufe, you ought to run Dave offn de place for snake-in-de-grassin' Mister Mack. And efn hit's a lie, you ought to hunt out de man or woman which started dat forket-tongue scandal, and run dem off. 'Cause, any way you looks at hit, hit's a ugly mess, and God don't love ugly."

THE foreman shrugged his indifference. "Ugly don't bother me," he told the Widow Duck. "Nothin' but Johnson grass in de field bothers me."

However, the foreman did ride down to the field along the "grudge" to see how things were going on. Mister Mack was plowing and Pauline was hoeing. Pauline straddled one row and chopped on the next one, swinging her hoe high and whipping it through the grass roots with a graceful ease. "For a hill nigger,"

in the field in a day or so. He rode away without further comment.

That night, when Mister Mack came to the barn with his mule, he sought out the foreman.

"Mister Giles," he said, "I'm up wid my crop, and Dave is behind in his choppin'. Efn hit's all de same wid you, I and Pauline gonter favor him outn de grass, tomorrow."

"Hit suit me," Giles stated.

The next Saturday morning, when the croppers were drawing rations for the coming week, Mister Mack appeared as usual, and drew provisions for two, and Dave casually remarked that he had become a widow-man during the week and would make out with a single ration allowance.

During the early part of the next week Dave finished plowing his own field, and instead of getting a hoe and helping Mister Mack and Pauline with the chopping he moved right into Mister Mack's field, and began to plow. The talk stood still. Nobody knew what to say now. Gossip was gossip, but when

"Daggone my skin!" Giles muttered. "Efn hit was anybody but Mister Mack, I'd swear Dave was doin' him a humbug. But dat old man too smart to git a humbug f'm Dave."

But there were others on the place who had a different idea.

As for Mister Mack, he walked a little slower and shuffled his feet a little less certainly. But Dave sang as he plowed, and Pauline laughed and wore ribbons in her hair to the field. And when Pauline wore ribbons in her hair the talk stopped. There was no more uncertainty about it, and so there was no need to gossip.

"Yessuh," Giles confided to the Widow Duck, "Dave and dat brown-skin done moved Mister Mack out in de shed-room. I'd a'never thunk hit."

ALONG during the middle of the summer, a white man drove up in an automobile and inquired as to the whereabouts of a man named Will McNeill.

"Don't know him," Giles told the white man.

The white man insisted that McNeill had come down to that locality the winter before, and was supposed to have settled on Little Bee Bend plantation.

He gave a good description of Mister Mack, but the foreman denied ever having seen such a person.

"I got good news for him," the white man stated. "It's about some business matters. You needn't be afraid to tell me. I'm not going to get him in trouble."

Giles with complete detachment said, "Hit must er been some yuther place."

The white man shook his head. "Is there another place down this way called Little Bee Bend?" he wanted to know.

Giles frowned and thought. "I hyared tell," he lied, "of a place wid a name like we's, down twarge Monroe."

The white man drove away, and Giles went directly to Mister Mack's field.

"Hit was a white man huntin' for you," he stated without preliminary.

Mister Mack thought for a minute. "What did he want?" he asked.

"He didn't say," the foreman replied. "Whar he, now?"

"I sont him along," Giles said. "Twarge Monroe. But he liable to come back. Efn hit's anything which make you feel like you'd like to git over in Texas about—"

"Naw," stated Mister Mack decidedly. "I ain't in no trouble, Mister Giles. What did de white man look like?"

Giles gave a detailed description. Mister Mack shook his head. "He warn't f'm around Ringgold," he decided. "Or else he moved dar since I left."

Giles rode away, and Mister Mack took up his work. But that evening he came to the commissary and bought some paper and a stamped envelope.

Four days later, Mister Mack received a letter at the commissary post office and that evening he walked to Giles' house.

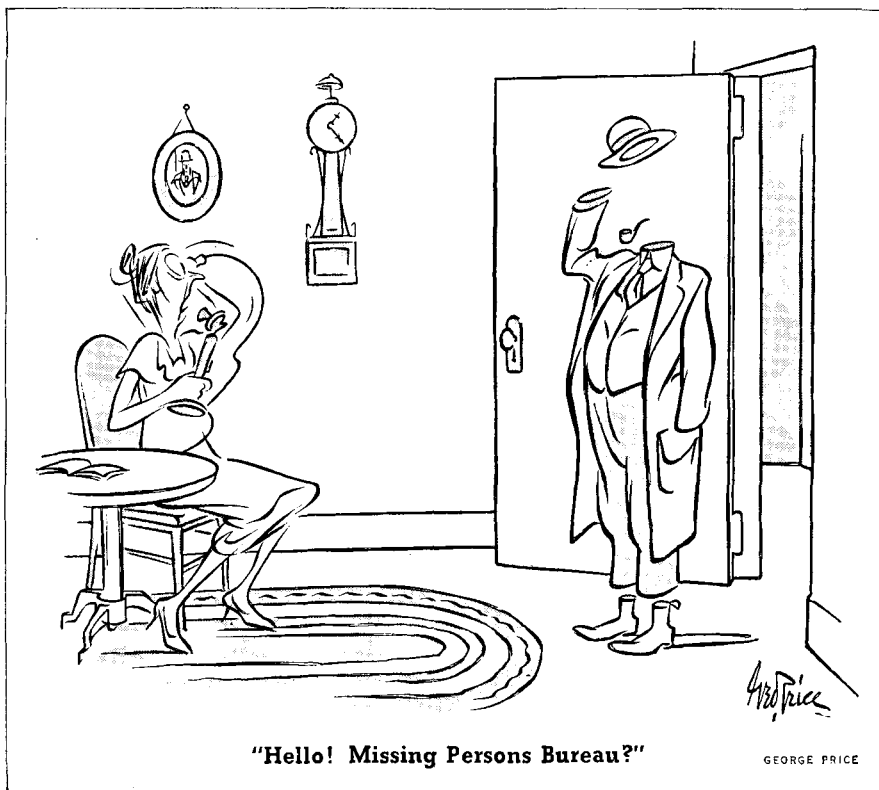
"Mister Giles," he said, "I promised you last winter dat I'd make a crop for you."

"Yo' crop," Giles said, "look as good to me as any yuther one on de place."

"Hit might be," pursued Mister Mack, "dat my business might lead me some-whars else."

Giles considered the suggestion briefly. "Hit'll take Dave plowin' and you and Pauline choppin' f'm now to pickin' time to keep dem two crops up. And hit'll take pickin', too. You know you ain't made no crop for me ontwell she's picked, ginned and sold."

"Dat's right," admitted Mister Mack,



the foreman grinned, "dat heifer kin whup de years offn dis grass!"

The plowing was good, too.

Ordinarily a crop in as good shape as was Mister Mack's would bring a smile to the foreman's face. But some way or other this crop was not a pretty picture before his eyes. He did not understand it, so he dug his heels into Prince's ribs and galloped over to Dave's field.

Dave was stepping high behind the swift Eagle. There was power in mule and man, and Giles liked that. But there was grass between the stalks which only a hoe could reach. "Whar Sugar at?" he demanded.

Dave drove to the end of the row, turned his mule about and set the plow into the next furrow. "Whoa, Eagle," he commanded. And turning to the foreman he asked, "What you say, Mist' Giles?"

"You hyared me," snorted the foreman.

"Git up, Eagle," Dave commanded. And after Eagle and Dave had moved a few steps, Dave called back over his shoulder, "She claim she ailin'."

Giles understood from Dave's attitude that there would be another woman

a man started plowing in another man's field while the other man chopped cotton in the first man's field, and a handsome young woman chopped in both fields, it was nothing to gossip about. It looked as if a good scandal would develop, and yet, some way or other, Mister Mack wasn't the kind of man that people would scandalize.

THE following Saturday morning, Mister Mack did something else that even Giles could not fathom. He appeared at the commissary, as usual, with his ration sack. Dave was with him, solemn and silent. Mister Mack appeared to have grown a little taller during the week. He stood up eye to eye with Giles and announced a change in his domestic situation.

"Dave," he announced, "is gonter plow in my field and live in me and Pauline's house. He a widow-man now, and he ain't got no woman to do for him. So he gonter plow in my field and I'm gonter chop in his'n."

Three rations were issued to Mister Mack, and Dave carried the sack on his shoulders, while the older man trudged down the turnrow behind him.

sorrowfully. "And dat de way she gonter be. I always do right what I do." He got up to leave.

"Ain't none er my business," the foreman offered, "but was hit bad news in dat letter you got?"

"Nope," Mister Mack said. "Hit was, you might say, good news. I writ to a white gentleman in de bank up at Ringgold a few days ago and ax him efn he knowed anybody f'm up dar was huntin' for me. So de white gentleman jest writ back and say, naw, he don't. But he go on to say he'll give me ten dollars a acre for dem thirty acres er land I got up dar. Dat's how come I drapped by, tonight. I figgered maybe efn de book-keeper figgered I owed a few dollars mo'n my crop was worth, I c'd pay de diff'unce, and take what was left."

Suddenly he stiffened and stood tall and proud, just like he had stood out in the rain the first time Giles saw him. "You know I'm a man, Mister Giles," he said, and his old voice lost its crack and boomed out the words. "I'm old and stove up. But I'm a man in my pride. And I don't like what's goin' on."

Giles bit his lip and sat in studious silence. "You know dat ain't no good," he told Mister Mack. "Runnin' off and leavin' yo' woman won't make you no bigger man den stayin' right wid her."

Mister Mack knew that was the truth. "Sometime," Giles said, "de Widow Duck got a good idea about what to do wid a mess like dis. Le's drap over to see her."

They found the Widow Duck sitting on her front porch.

Giles briefly related Mister Mack's problem. Two things immediately occurred to the Widow Duck. One was that Mister Mack should publicly divorce Pauline, and the other was that Dave should immediately marry her.

"I promised her, ten years ago," persisted Mister Mack, "dat I'd provide—"

"You is providin', ain't you?" snorted the Widow Duck. "You been feedin' her, and den you brung her down hyar and found her a man she love wid. Dat's a heap better luck den happens to most womens like her. And dem three hundred dollars? Dey'll be jest as good next year—"

"De offer," stated Mister Mack, "might not hold. When I left up dar de same white gentleman offered me a dollar a acre for my land."

"What de diff'unce?" demanded the Widow Duck. "Thirty dollars or three hundred dollars—you can't stick hit in a camel's eye."

So Mister Mack, the following Sunday, publicly and solemnly and in the presence of the entire congregation of The Old Ship of Zion, divorced Pauline. And with Mister Mack playfully "giving the bride away," B'r Charlie joined Pauline and Dave in matrimony.

THE next day another white man—a more important-looking white man than the first, with a much bigger automobile—drove up and asked for Will McNeill. "Mister Mack, they call him," the white man told Giles.

This time Giles pointed out Mister Mack.

And before that white man had got halfway to the field another automobile drove up, with two important-looking men in the back seat and a colored chauffeur at the wheel. Giles directed them also to Mister Mack's field.

The foreman was curious to know what it was all about, but the cotton began opening, and he became too busy to think about anything but the details of getting the crop picked. And by the time the crop was gathered, Giles had forgotten the matter.

But when settling time came, the whole tangled mess of Mister Mack, his wife and her new husband came back to Giles. The Bossman and the book-

keeper were trying to arrive at an equitable solution to the question of who had bought what at the commissary, and for whom. Giles tried to help with dates and events. "De crops," Giles suggested, "ought to be kept apart. 'Cause Mister Mack started his crop, and he stayed to de last lock was picked. Make Mister Mack pay for what him and Pauline got before about de middle er May, and make Dave do de same. And den take ev'ything dey bought after dat, and make three shares. One for Dave, one for Pauline, and one for Mister Mack. And den take and make Dave pay for him and Pauline. And efn hit's any money left, give hit to de mens, and let dem fight hit out wid Pauline."

Mister Mack, it developed, had a surplus of thirty-seven dollars when his account was paid.

"Dat make us square?" he asked the Bossman. "I don't owe you nothin'?"

"Not a cent," the Bossman stated.

"Dat's de way I likes to leave," Mister Mack said. "Not owin' nobody a cent."

HE WALKED out to the commissary porch. Pauline was among the many wives of the men who were on hand at the settling.

"Pauline," Mister Mack said, "hyar's twenty-seven dollars for you. I drew thirty-seven. I figgers maybe you ought to have ha'f, but I don't need but about ten, so I'm givin' you de rest."

"Sho', Mack," Pauline said. "But you don't have to give me no mo'n right—"

"You married wid me for my money," Mister Mack stated, "and I knowed hit at de time. So hit's jest and right I should give you some money."

Pauline took the money. "Yes, Mack," she said frankly. "I married wid you for yo' money."

"Do dat money make ev'ything all satisfied?" asked Mister Mack.

"All satisfied wid me," Pauline declared.

He turned to Dave. "Do I owe you anything?"

"Not one copper cent," Dave said.

"Hey, wait a minute," Giles ordered. "Mister Mack, you's settlin' up like you's fixin' to leave Little Bee. You know you got a home hyar—"

"Yes, Mister Giles," the old man said, "but I'm fixin' to leave."

"When you sell de land and git dem three hundred dollars—?"

"De land," Mister Mack chuckled, "done drapped in de price again. Hit's back to a dollar a acre."

"And you won't have but thirty dollars betwixt you and de Judgment Day!" broke in the Widow Duck.

Mister Mack drew up to his full six feet and more. "Mis' Duck," he said, "I ain't fixin' to sell dem thirty acres. I'm fixin' to build me a nice little house and live on hit to I dies off."

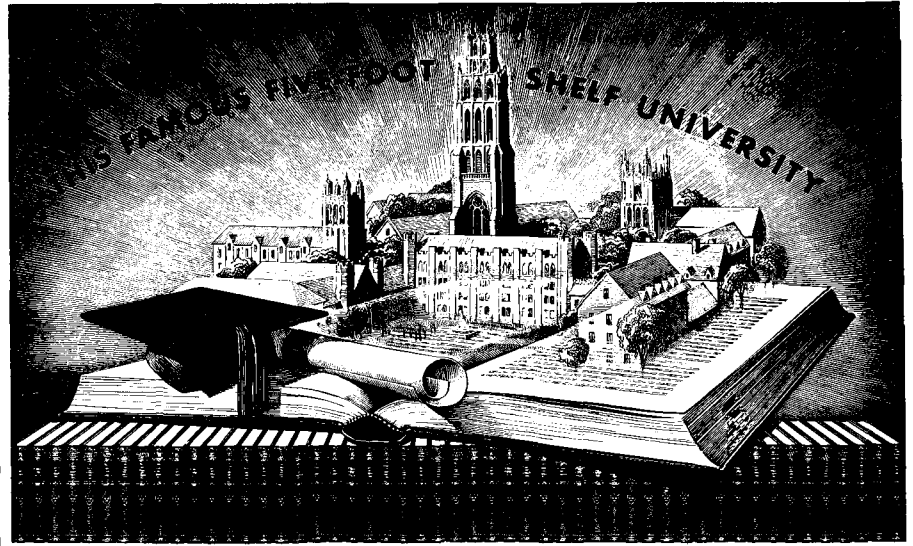
"Crazy," estimated the Widow Duck.

"Nope," objected Mister Mack. "Jest old. And lucky. You see, on account er I was so old, I let y'all tawk me outn sellin' at three hundred dollars. So de white gentlemens come down and got to argyin', and de fust thing I knowed one of 'em had done pulled out his checkbook and writ me down for fifteen thousand dollars for a five-year lease, and den give me a con-trac' which say I'm to get a little er all de oil—"

"Oil!" yelled Pauline. "Man, is us got oil on us's land?"

"Us," Mister Mack told her coldly, "ain't got nothin' on nothin'. Me? I got fifteen thousand dollars in de bank. And efn dey finds oil, I might have me fifteen million. But fifteen thousand or fifteen million, hit's all one and de same. You can't stick hit in a camel's eye. So, God bless you, one and all!"

"Amen," said the Widow Duck fervently. "What I'm tawkin' 'bout, God changed conditions!"



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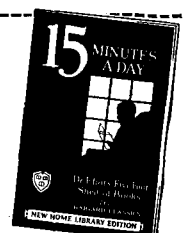
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Mr.
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Murder for Christmas

Continued from page 19

"Well—I—er—couldn't say as to the exact time."

"Ah," said Sugden. "But we can! We always check up on these things very carefully. Very carefully indeed. The call was put through at 8:59 and it was terminated at 9:04. Your father, Mr. Lee, was killed about 9:15. I must ask you once more for an account of your movements."

"I've told you—I was telephoning!"

"No, Mr. Lee, you weren't."

"Nonsense—you must have made a mistake! Well, I may, perhaps have just finished telephoning—I think I debated making another call—was just considering whether it was—er—worth the expense—when I heard the noise upstairs." "You would hardly debate whether or not to make a telephone call for ten minutes."

George went purple. He began to splutter.

"What do you mean? What the devil do you mean? Damned impudence! Are you doubting my word? Doubting the word of a man of my position I—er—why should I have to account for every minute of my time?"

Superintendent Sugden said with a stolidness that Poirot admired, "It's usual."

George turned angrily on the chief constable. "Colonel Johnson. Do you countenance this—this unprecedented attitude?"

The chief constable said crisply, "In a murder case, Mr. Lee, these questions must be asked—and answered."

"I have answered them! I had finished telephoning and was—er—deliberating a further call."

"You were in this room when the alarm was raised upstairs?"

"I was—yes, I was."

Johnson turned to Magdalene.

"I think, Mrs. Lee," he said, "that you stated that you were telephoning when the alarm broke out, and that at the time you were alone in this room."

MAGDALENE was flustered. She caught her breath, looked sideways at George—at Sugden, then appealingly at Colonel Johnson.

She said, "Oh, really—I don't know—I don't remember what I said . . . I was so upset . . ."

Sugden said, "We've got it all written down, you know."

She turned her batteries on him—wide, appealing eyes—quivering mouth. But she met in return the rigid aloofness of a man of stern respectability who didn't approve of her type.

She said uncertainly, "I—I—of course I telephoned. I can't be quite sure just when—" She stopped.

George said, "What's all this? Where did you telephone from? Not in here."

Superintendent Sugden said, "I suggest, Mrs. Lee, that you didn't telephone at all. In that case, where were you and what were you doing?"

Magdalene glanced distractedly about her and burst into tears. She sobbed, "George, don't let them bully me! You know that if anyone frightens me and thunders questions at me, I can't remember anything at all! I—I didn't know what I was saying that night—it was all so horrible—and I was so upset—and they're being so beastly to me . . ."

She jumped up and ran sobbing out of the room.

Springing up, George Lee strode out of the room and banged the door.

Superintendent Sugden threw his head back and laughed.

"We've got them going properly!" he said. "Now we'll see!"

Johnson said frowning, "Extraordinary business! Looks fishy. We must get a further statement out of her."

Sugden said easily, "Oh, she'll be back in a minute or two. When she's decided what to say. Eh, Mr. Poirot?"

Poirot, who had been sitting in a dream, gave a start. "Pardon?"

"I said she'll be back."

"Probably—yes, possibly—Oh, yes!"

Sugden said, staring at him, "What's the matter, Mr. Poirot? Seen a ghost?"

POIROT said slowly, "You know—I am not sure that I haven't done just exactly that."

Colonel Johnson said, impatiently, "Well, Sugden, anything else?"

Sugden said, "I've been trying to check up on the order in which everyone ar-

"Where did you wait, Madame?" asked Poirot.

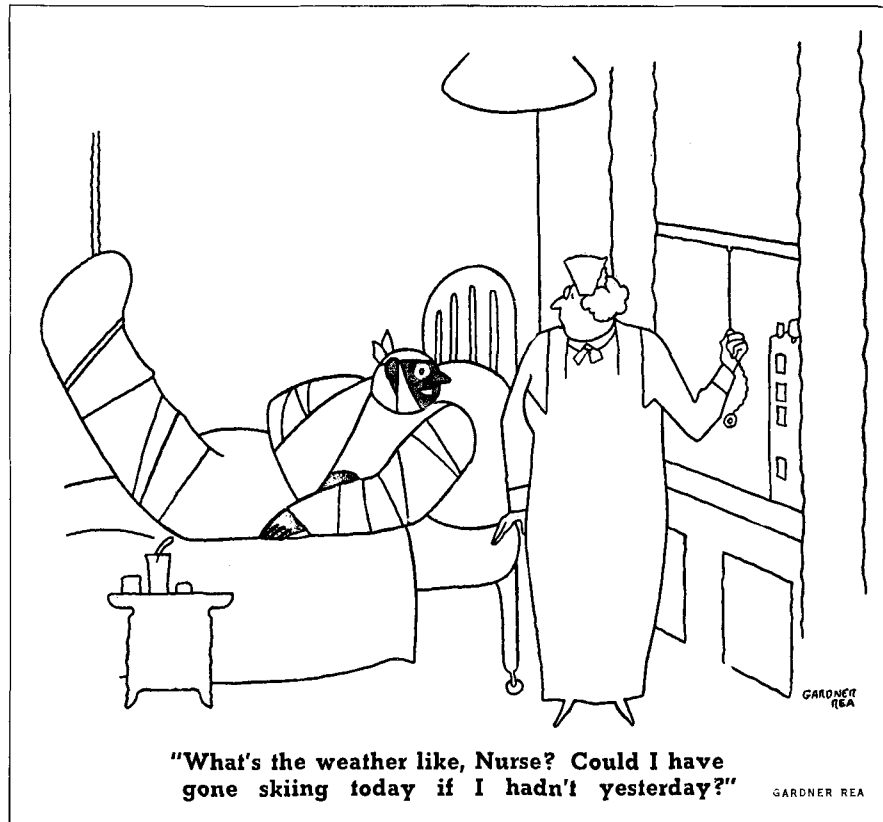
"There's a place for coats and things behind the stairs. It's dark there. I slipped back there where I could see George come out from this room. But he didn't come out and then all the noise happened and Mr. Lee screamed and I ran upstairs."

"So your husband did not leave this room until the moment of the murder?"

"No."

The chief constable said, "And you yourself from nine o'clock to nine-fifteen were waiting in the recess behind the stairs?"

"Yes, but I couldn't say so, you see! They'd want to know what I was doing there. It's been very, very awkward for me, you do see that, don't you?"



rived on the scene of the murder. It's quite clear—"

The door opened and Magdalene came quickly in. She was breathing fast and had a bright spot of color in each cheek. She came up to the table and said quietly, "My husband thinks I'm lying down. I slipped out of my room quietly. Colonel Johnson," she appealed to him with wide, distressed eyes, "if I tell you the truth you will keep quiet about it, won't you? I mean you don't have to make everything public?"

Colonel Johnson said, "You mean, I take it, Mrs. Lee, something that has no connection with the crime?"

"Yes, no connection at all. Just something in my—my private life."

The chief constable said, "You'd better make a clean breast of it, Mrs. Lee, and leave us to judge."

Magdalene said, her eyes swimming, "Yes, I will trust you. I know I can. You look so kind. You see it's like this. There's somebody—" she stopped.

"Yes, Mrs. Lee?"

"I wanted to telephone to somebody last night—a man—a friend of mine, and I didn't want George to know about it. I know it was very wrong of me—but, well, it was like that. So I went to telephone after dinner, when I thought George would be safely in the dining room. But when I got here I heard him telephoning, so I waited."

Johnson said dryly, "It was certainly awkward."

She smiled at him sweetly. "I'm so relieved to have told you the truth. And you won't tell my husband, will you? No, I'm sure you won't! I can trust you, all of you."

She included them all in her final pleading look, then she slipped quickly out of the room.

Colonel Johnson drew a deep breath. "Well," he said, "it might be like that! It's a perfectly plausible story. On the other hand—"

"It might not," finished Sugden. "That's just it. We don't know."

LYDIA LEE stood by the far window of the drawing room, looking out. Her figure was half hidden by the heavy window curtain. A sound in the room made her turn with a start to see Hercule Poirot standing by the door.

She said, "You startled me, M. Poirot."

"I apologize, Madame. I walk softly."

She said, "I thought it was Horbury."

Hercule Poirot nodded. "It is true, he steps softly, that one—like a cat—or a thief."

He paused a moment, watching her. Her face showed nothing, but she made a slight grimace of distaste as she said, "I have never cared for that man. I shall be glad to get rid of him."

"I think you will be wise to do so, Madame."

She looked at him quickly. She said, "What do you mean? Do you know anything against him?"

Poirot said, "He is a man who collects secrets—and uses them to his advantage."

She said sharply, "Do you think he knows anything—about the murder?"

Poirot shrugged his shoulders and said, "He has quiet feet and long ears. He may have overheard something that he is keeping to himself."

Lydia said clearly, "Do you mean that he may try to blackmail one of us?"

"It is within the bounds of possibility. But that is not what I came here to say."

"What did you come to say?"

Poirot said slowly, "I have been talking with M. Alfred Lee. He has made to me a proposition, and I wished to discuss it with you before accepting or declining it. He wishes me to take up the investigation very seriously. He demands that I stay here, in the house, and do my utmost to get to the bottom of the matter."

Lydia said sharply, "Well?"

POIROT said slowly, "I would not wish to accept an invitation that was not endorsed by the lady of the house."

She said coldly, "Naturally I endorse my husband's invitation."

"Yes, Madame, but I need more than that. Do you really want me to come here?"

"Why not?"

"Let us be more frank. What I ask you is this: do you want the truth to come out, or not?"

Lydia bit her lip, hesitated, and said, "Perhaps it is better to speak frankly. Of course I understand you! The position is not a pleasant one. My father-in-law has been brutally murdered, and unless a case can be made out against the most likely suspect—Horbury—for robbery and murder—and it seems that it cannot—then it comes to this—one of his own family killed him. To bring that person to justice will mean bringing shame and disgrace on us all. . . . If I am to speak honestly I must say that I do not want this to happen."

Poirot said, "You are content for the murderer to escape unpunished?"

"There are probably several undiscovered murderers at large in the world."

"That, I grant you."

"Does one more matter, then?"

Poirot said, "And what about the other members of the family? The innocent?"

She stared. "What about them?"

"Do you realize that if it turns out as you hope, no one will ever know. The shadow will remain on all alike. . . ."

She said uncertainly, "I hadn't thought of that. . . ."

Poirot said, "No one will ever know who the guilty person is. . . ."

He added softly, "Unless you already know, Madame?"

She cried out, "You have no business to say that! It's not true! Oh, if only it could be a stranger—not a member of the family."

Poirot said, "It might be both."

She stared at him. "What do you mean?"

"It might be a member of the family—and at the same time a stranger. . . . You do not see what I mean? Eh bien, it is an idea that has occurred to the mind of Hercule Poirot."

He looked at her. "Well, Madame, what am I to say to Mr. Lee?"

Lydia raised her hands and let them